

---

This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<https://books.google.com>







UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ



3 2106 01943 0450

# ETNOLOGISKA STUDIER

25

## FIJIAN STUDIES

BY

KARL ERIK LARSSON

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

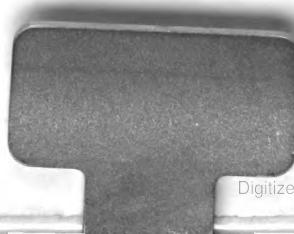
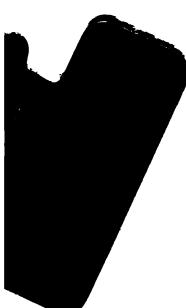
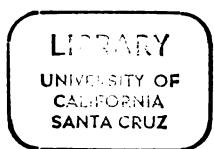
MAY 17 1967

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
SANTA CRUZ

ETNOGRAFISKA MUSEET

---

GÖTEBORG







# ETNOLOGISKA STUDIER

**25**



# FIJIAN STUDIES

BY

KARL ERIK LARSSON  
//

GÖTEBORG

---

1960

*Copyright 1960*

*by*

*Etnografiska Museet, Göteborg*

---

*The Humanistic Foundation of Sweden*

*(Humanistiska Fonden)*

*has contributed to defray the cost of printing*

*Printed in Sweden*

---

GOTHENBURG

ELANDERS BOKTRYCKERI AKTIEBOLAG

GN  
2  
6.  
V. 25

## PREFACE

The Fiji Group is an area of regional differences across a cultural frontier. Both Melanesia and Polynesia reach to Fiji.

This group of islands has supplied the textbooks of social anthropology with one of its classic examples: the sister's son taking what he wants from his uncle's goods, a right known as the *vasu* privilege. Working on a study of this privilege,<sup>1</sup> where both published and unpublished documents were drawn upon, I was struck by the local differences in the Group and saw in it an ideal area for comparative research. In my study of the *vasu* privilege I could for instance compare two avoidance situations, one where avoidance between brother and sister was marked and another where brother and sister could meet with more ease. These two relations of a different character had their correspondence in similar situations between nephew and maternal uncle: in one case avoidance in another more ease in intercourse.

The work with 19th century documents about Fiji led to another study where I am now trying to subdivide Fiji culturally. My primary interest is to see whether frontiers concerning different aspects of life coincide: whether the same frontiers are to be found for phenomena as different as dialects, kinship systems, technical procedures and shapes of objects. This involves looking for Fijian collections and in them objects which are localized within the Group. For that reason research has been done in museums with important Fijian collections and foremost among them has been the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge housing Anatole von Hügel's large collection. I have also studied Th. Kleinschmidt's collection in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig and the old pieces brought home by masters of bêche de mer ships in the Peabody Museum of Salem, Mass. Important collections have also been found in the British Museum, in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, in the Manchester Museum, in Marischal College, Aberdeen, and in the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum für Völkerkunde, Cologne. The Pitt Rivers Museum has a very good collection of localized bark-cloths. In France my Fijian

<sup>1</sup>) Accepted as a Fil. Lic. thesis at the University of Gothenburg in 1955: *Vasu-privilegiets på Fiji-öarna, en förstudie i en sedvänjas sociala och kulturella bakgrund.* (The *vasu* privilege of the Fiji Islands, a preparatory study of the social and cultural background of a custom.) A typed copy is in the library of the Etnografiska Museet, Gothenburg.

research has been successful particularly in La Rochelle, at the Muséum Lafaille, and in Toulouse, at the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle. The Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini" in Rome has an interesting collection of stone adzes localized within Fiji. Among the important collections of Fijian ethnographical objects which I unfortunately have not yet seen are those in the Fiji Museum, Suva, and in the Auckland Institute and Museum.

This regional study of Fijian life is as much a study of old documents as a gathering of evidence from museum collections. Useful information has been found in the journals of the Wesleyan missionaries and in the log-books of the Salem sea-captains. The archives of the Methodist Missionary Society in London and of the Peabody Museum in Salem turned out to be mines of knowledge. Some microfilms of documents in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, were also of considerable value.

The bulk of material for this work about the cultural regions of Fiji is already brought together but not worked out. In material culture it will be a study of bark-cloth making, pottery, housing and the types of adzes. *The conch shells of Fiji* now published in my *Fijian Studies* has also its place here. *Human images in Fiji* is a by-product. When doing research in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in 1953 I got interested in its Fijian figures and clubs with anthropomorphs especially as I knew about Thomas Williams' opinion that the Fijians did not worship any idols in human form. This interest followed me in my Fijian research first as a subsidiary line and then taking more and more of my time. It became apparent that a study of human images in Fiji could be an entrance to research about the relations between Fiji and neighbouring Tonga and about the social history of these groups of islands in the 19th century. And Fiji and Tonga were in the last century part of a Pacific where trading vessels, whalers and labour ships opened new worlds for the natives, worlds that not only embraced New England and New South Wales but also other groups of islands in the same ocean. A task of Pacific ethnohistory is to investigate how these new worlds affected the cultures of the different groups of islands. Research started as a local study thus developed and had to take into account wider perspectives than were originally planned.

The *Fijian Studies* now published are to a large extent a work with paste and scissors, a quoting of old documents and a recording of the opinion of other research workers. And it would have been impossible to make these studies without the kind assistance of colleagues in museums the world over.

I am therefore greatly indebted to all those who helped me. They are so many that as a matter of fact it is impossible for me to thank them all by name.

My chief thanks are due to Mr. G. K. Roth, C. M. G., O. B. E., formerly Secretary for Fijian Affairs in the Government of Fiji, now Honorary Keeper of the Fijian Collection in the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge. He has most generously furnished me with new information, some of it collected in his own research. He has also seen most of my study about the images in manuscript and proofs. His comments were most valuable. He can, however, in no way be made responsible for shortcomings of my own which may be found.

At the same time I want to thank Dr. G. H. S. Bushnell, Curator of the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge. He made me feel at home from the beginning in his Museum and has carefully answered my many enquiries.

The Methodist Missionary Society in London also helped me considerably by letting me study old letters and journals in their archives. I owe a special debt to the archivists of the Society who so kindly assisted me in finding all the relevant boxes of letters and diaries.

I am also much indebted to the staff of the Peabody Museum in Salem. Mr. Ernest S. Dodge, the Director of the Museum, was indefatigable in showing me documents of importance for my Fijian research.

Mr. R. A. Derrick, Curator of the Fiji Museum in Suva, has also supplied me with valuable advice and information.

For considerable help I wish further to thank Professor N. Odhner, Stockholm, Dr. B. Hubendick, Gothenburg, Dr. S. H. Wassén, Gothenburg, Dr. K. Birket-Smith, Copenhagen, Professor M. Heydrich, Cologne, Dr. H. Tischner, Hamburg, Dr. H. Damm, Leipzig, Dr. G. Koch, Berlin, Dr. Irmgard Moschner, Vienna, Dr. Brigitte Menzel, Berlin, Dr. A. A. Gerbrands, Leyden, Dr. S. Kooijman, Leyden, Miss Madeleine Rousseau, Paris, Rev. Father P. O'Reilly, Paris, Rev. Father C. E. Verlingue, Rome, Mr. E. Dahl, La Rochelle, Professor V. L. Grottanelli, Rome, Professor R. D. Lockhart, Aberdeen, Mr. C. Aldred, Edinburgh, Mr. R. Kerr, Edinburgh, Mr. J. Forde-Johnston, Manchester, Mr. W. C. Brice, Manchester, Mr. A. H. Oswald, Birmingham, Mr. T. K. Penniman, Oxford, Dr. R. Churchill Blackie, Exeter, Mr. A. Digby, London, Mr. W. B. Fagg, London, Mr. B. A. L. Cranstone, London, Mr. G. B. Milner, London, Mr. C. M. Weekley, London, Miss Elisabeth Little, New York, Mr. G. G. Goodwin, New York, Dr. Dorothy Spencer, Bryn Mawr, Dr. A.

Kidder II, Philadelphia, Miss Marianne Stoller, Philadelphia, Miss Geraldine Bruckner, Philadelphia, Dr. R. Tucker Abbott, Philadelphia, Mr. F. A. Ulmer, Philadelphia, Dr. F. M. Setzler, Washington, Dr. H. Rehder, Washington, Dr. D. S. Marshall, Danvers, Mass., Dr. K. P. Emory, Honolulu, Dr. G. Archey, Auckland, Dr. H. D. Skinner, Dunedin, Dr. R. Duff, Christchurch, Dr. T. Barrow, Wellington, Mr. A. Massola, Melbourne, Mr. N. B. Tindale, Adelaide, Dr. A. Capell, Sydney, and Rev. Father R. Jarre, Mbemana, Fiji.

Some of the research for the two studies now published has been facilitated by grants for travelling from the Humanistic Foundation and from the Royal and Hvitfeldt Foundation for which I beg to convey my respectful thanks.

I wish to express my warm thanks to the following institutions and persons who gave me their permission to publish photos and drawings and to use unpublished documents or helped me with photographs of their own:

Mitchell Library, Sydney, United States National Museum, Washington, Anthropological Museum, Marischal College, Aberdeen, Mr. R. C. G. D. Higginson, Suva, Mr. G. K. Roth, Cambridge, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, Dr. D. S. Marshall, Danvers, Mass., Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society, Edinburgh, Methodist Missionary Society, London, University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, Dr. T. Barrow, Wellington, National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne, Etnografisk Samling, Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, Museum of Primitive Art, New York, University Museum, Philadelphia, Fiji Museum, Suva, Miss Madeleine Rousseau, Paris, Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leyden, Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, Manchester Museum, Manchester, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, Peabody Museum, Salem, Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte, Hamburg, Dr. Dorothy Spencer, Bryn Mawr, and South Australian Museum, Adelaide.

Finally I wish to thank the Director of the Gothenburg Ethnographical Museum, Professor K. G. Izikowitz, for the insertion of these *Fijian Studies* in the Museum's series the *Etnologiska Studier*. He has both as my teacher in anthropology and as Director of the Museum encouraged me in every way in my research.

Gothenburg Ethnographical Museum,

December, 1959.

KARL ERIK LARSSON.

## CONTENTS

	pages
<i>Human images in Fiji . . . . .</i>	<i>13—118</i>
<i>The conch shells of Fiji . . . . .</i>	<i>121—147</i>

## ABBREVIATIONS

AM: Australian Museum, Sydney.  
AMNH: American Museum of Natural History, New York.  
BM: British Museum, London.  
BPBM: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu.  
C-ES: Etnografisk Samling, Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen.  
CM: Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.  
C-UMAE: University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge.  
L-MfV: Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig.  
LP: Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini," Rome.  
L-RvV: Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leyden.  
MC: Anthropological Museum, Marischal College, Aberdeen.  
ML: Muséum Lafaille, La Rochelle.  
MMS: Methodist Missionary Society, London.  
MPA: Museum of Primitive Art, New York.  
NMV: National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne.  
OC: Oldman Collection.  
PR: Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.  
P-UM: University Museum, Philadelphia.  
RSM: Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.  
USNM: United States National Museum, Washington.  
V-MfV: Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna.

## HUMAN IMAGES IN FIJI



Research can follow two lines. An investigation can be restricted to a small area — a group of islands — or it can be enlarged to embrace a culture area as the South Seas or a subdivision as Melanesia or Polynesia. The weakness of investigations of small areas, local studies, is of course the omission of a broader perspective.

Phenomena are not seen in their context of the cultures of the larger area, only a part of something larger is seen. The difficulty in the study of larger areas is in the use of local sources which may be imperfect and may cause a wrong interpretation. In an investigation of the house forms of the South Seas it may be tempting to find a connection of culture history between the circular houses of New Caledonia and the houses in the central hills of Viti Levu, the largest island of the Fiji archipelago. A further study will show that the Fijian houses look round on the outside and still are square in plan. The present piece of work is mainly a local study of Fijian and, to some extent, Tongan phenomena. It is a grouping of data from literature, archives and museums concerning human figures of any form. Anthropomorphic forms in reliefs are included.

*Rev. Thomas Williams,*

33 years of age and missionary in cannibal Fiji since 1840, wrote in 1848 a letter to the children of the Wesleyan Sunday School of his native town, Horncastle in Lincolnshire. About the children in Fiji he said:

“But they do not worship images, such as you have often seen in pictures. I have seen some large stones, about which they believe very ridiculous tales, & to which they pay respect; and on feast days send a portion of food to some of the stones, but I never saw an image worshipped in Feejee. ‘Idols of wood and stone,’ the work of men’s hands, they do not worship. Once I had reason to think they did. Since then I have conversed with some of the tribes charged with worshipping wooden images, and have purchased two from them. They are badly executed figures, of a man and a woman, designed to frighten crying children, not to be worshipped.”<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Williams is well known as the author of vol. I of “Fiji and the Fijians,” our best account of Fiji ways of life of the 1840’s, both an historical

---

<sup>1</sup> MMS. Letter from Mbua, Fiji, 19.9.1848.

document and an evaluation of heathen Fiji.<sup>2</sup> Williams stayed on Lakemba in Lau from 1840 to 1843, at Somosomo on Taveuni from 1843 to 1847 and at Mbua on western Vanua Levu from 1847 to 1853.<sup>3</sup> His work about the Fijians was published in 1858. He says there: "Idolatry — in the strict sense of the term — the Fijian seems to have never known; for he makes no attempt to fashion material representations of his gods." Speaking about Fijians in their relation to their children Williams gives the following information: "Grim, immodest representations of the human figure, about eighteen inches long, are used on the larger islands to terrify the children into quietness."<sup>4</sup>

In his journal, published by G. C. Henderson in 1931, Williams says, in February 1842, that he had an interview with the "Lavuka" chief on Lakemba. Levuka is here the village near Tumbou on that island. This interview being over "and several Feejeeans and Tonguese having assembled, we had a lengthened discourse respecting the gods worshipped by the latter in times past, and those worshipped by the mass of our poor Feejeeans at the present time. I cannot gain the least clue thus far to the Feejeeans having at any time worshipped any visible object."<sup>5</sup>

Williams left some drawings which are now in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Among them are two sketches of human images (fig. 1) from 1848. The figures are male and female and Williams gives the following information concerning them: "Two figures in my possession in Sepr. 1848. Height of each about 1ft. 6in."<sup>6</sup> It is not difficult to find out that we have here drawings of the two figures mentioned in the letter to the Sunday School at Horncastle, also dated in September, 1848. The height of the figures is the same as that given in "Fiji and the Fijians."

Another drawing shows the *mbure*, the heathen "temple" of Na Tavasara at Somosomo.<sup>7</sup> Na Tavasara was a *kalou*, a "god". This sketch dated 1849 but showing the *mbure* as it appeared in 1847 has been included as an illustration in "Fiji and the Fijians."<sup>8</sup> In his "Notes and Observations"

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Williams & James Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians, the islands and their inhabitants; mission history*. Edited by G. Stringer Rowe. London, 1858.

<sup>3</sup> G. C. Henderson (ed.), *The journal of Thomas Williams, missionary in Fiji, 1840—1853*. Vols. I—II. Sydney, 1931.

<sup>4</sup> Williams & Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Pp. 216 & 177.

<sup>5</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. I. P. 67.

<sup>6</sup> Mr. and Mrs. G. K. Roth, Cambridge, have very kindly called my attention to the existence of these two drawings in Williams's *Sketch Book*, Mitchell Library, B. 579, p. 185.

<sup>7</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. II. Facing p. 286. Williams's *Sketch Book*, p. 79.

<sup>8</sup> Williams & Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. P. 222.

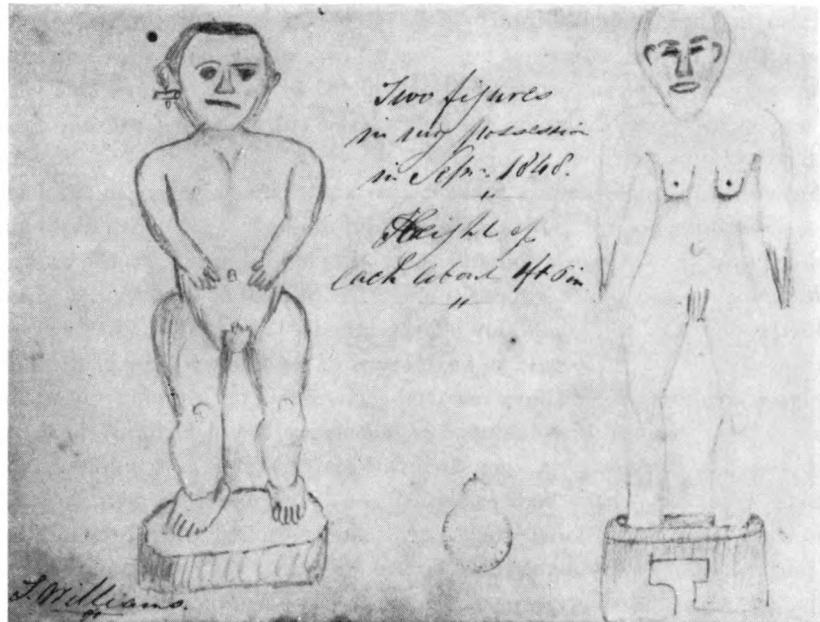


Fig. 1. Two figures from Thomas Williams's *Sketch Book*.



Fig. 2. Na Tavasara's *mbure*, Somosomo.

— also in the Mitchell Library — Williams says about this *mbure*: “I should think its walls were not less than 12 feet high, and all of *vesi* (a kind of mahogany) planking, every inch of which had to be chopped out with an axe. The rough figure on the left of the entrance was cut out solid with the plank on which it appears.”<sup>9</sup>

Among Williams’ drawings there is also a sketch of a figure in the form of a suspension hook.<sup>10</sup> The sketch is from January 1843 when Williams was visiting Somosomo. Williams says the following about the figure: “The nameless lady on the opposite page I copied from the original which is in the possession of the widow of the late Rev. W. Cross, Chairman of the Feejee District. It is said to have been the goddess of some of the Bau King’s carpenters, and to have received certain acts of worship from them. That it ever was really worshipped is (according to the light we have on such subjects at present) a very doubtful matter. It is not unlikely that it may be or may have been esteemed as a ‘work of art’ — an indication that, had its maker been better taught, and supplied with better tools, he might have become a tolerable carver. The two pins rising out of the block on which her ladyship stands push hard against her divinity, it being more than supposable that they were designed to suspend baskets of Feejeean dishes (*lalakai*) or water nuts or some such things upon. Her ladyship was introduced to me by Mrs. Cross during my visit to Somosomo in 1842–3. At that time her eyes were painted vermilion.”<sup>11</sup> Williams has a post-script from February 1849: “I am now where such things are not uncommon. I have inquired carefully into the subject, and have come to the conclusion that nothing of this kind is worshipped by the Feejeeans.”<sup>12</sup> The post-script was written when Williams stayed at Mbua, on Vanua Levu.

In his work “Fiji and the Fijians” Williams also has an illustration of human images as ornaments on the pilasters of the deck-houses of the canoes.<sup>13</sup> (Fig. 5.)

<sup>9</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. I. Foot-note, p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> Ib. Vol. I. Facing p. 68. Williams’s *Sketch Book*, after p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> Ib. Vol. I. Foot-note, p. 67. Williams’ note was written in 1843. — A comparison with the original shows that Henderson has not quoted this note verbatim. The last sentence runs as follows: “At that time her eyes, & some other parts were painted vermilion.” — Joseph W. Osborn, clerk of the ship *Emerald of Salem* on her voyage to Fiji 1833–36, writes in his journal: “... a [Fijian] woman does not think she is beautiful until she has her face smeared with vermilion.” Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass. M 656 1833 E 5.

<sup>12</sup> Ib. Vol. I. Foot-note, pp. 67 f.

<sup>13</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Facing p. 88. — The original drawing is in Williams’ *Sketch Book*, facing p. 161, but it is mutilated and the section showing the pilaster with the human figures is missing. An examination of a photocopy made it possible for me recently to attribute the following note, on the same page as the drawing and by Williams, to the missing pilaster: “... I copied from a Na Vitilevu (cano)e: it is a whim & not common.”



Fig. 3. "The goddess of some of the Bau King's carpenters."

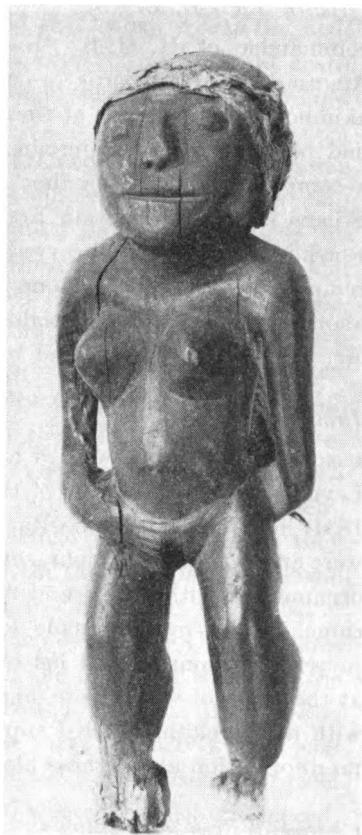


Fig. 4. Female wooden figure from Sandalwood Bay, Vanua Levu. H.: 38.7 cm. — USNM 2998.

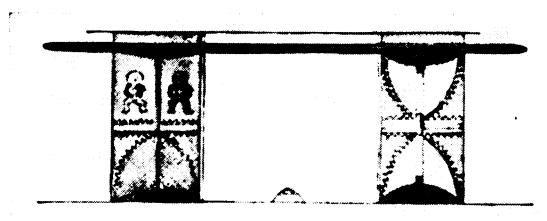


Fig. 5. Canoe ornaments.

*Captain John E. Erskine,*

commander of H. M. S. "Havannah," met Williams in Mbua Bay in August 1849. He records "a curious little squat wooden figure, with arms akimbo, which we took at first for an idol, but from Mr. Williams' account had been carved for amusement." It was given to Captain Jenner who accompanied Erskine on the "Havannah's" cruise.<sup>14</sup> Speaking about the Fijians in general Captain Erskine says: "The Feejeeans are said not to worship idols, although carved figures are occasionally met with in their temples. I never saw but one image of the kind, a squat human figure of about a foot and a half in height, which had served as a plaything to the Rev. Mr. Williams's children, and was by him presented to Captain Jenner."<sup>15</sup>

*James Oliver,*

a sailor, gives an account of happenings in Mathuata on northern Vanua Levu in his work "Wreck of the Glide" published in 1846. He visited in 1831, inland from "Bonne Rarah" (Vunirara), a "boore." "Near the door were arranged in open sight, several small, round blocks of wood, singularly ornamented with sennit and carved work, to which the natives, as they came in and retired, made low obeisance. As usual, no females were present."<sup>16</sup> Summing up his experience from Fiji he says: "I have seen at the doors of their Boore, and other places, blocks of wood wound about with native cloth, which I supposed to be idols."<sup>17</sup> Oliver's account gives no information about these blocks as being or having human images.

*Charles Wilkes' expedition*

An exploring expedition from the United States visited Fiji in 1840 and its commander, Charles Wilkes, saw at Somosomo an old *mbure* near the missionaries' house. This *mbure* had fallen into decay. "Here was found the only carved image I saw in the group. It was a small figure cut out of solid wood, and the missionaries did not seem to think that it was regarded by the people with any reverence."<sup>18</sup> This *mbure* was Na Tavarasa's *mbure* of which the Reverend Richard Burdsall Lyth says in a letter from Somosomo on the 27th October, 1842: "The bure of their principal

<sup>14</sup> J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a cruise among the islands of the western Pacific*. London, 1853. P. 230.

<sup>15</sup> Ib. P. 252.

<sup>16</sup> James Oliver & W. G. D., *Wreck of the Glide; with an account of life and manners at the Fiji Islands*. Boston, 1846. Pp. 115 f.

<sup>17</sup> Ib. P. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition. During the years 1838, . . . 1842*. Vol. III. Philadelphia, 1844. P. 161.

god here has been rebuilt, and they had fixed that, when it was finished, they should go to feast at Vaturova. It was expected they would go to war with them against their enemies, and then their bloody god would get a consecration sacrifice.”<sup>19</sup>

In Wilkes’ “Narrative” there is also mentioned that an “idol” was seen on the way between Vaturua and Matainole at Sandalwood Bay on western Vanua Levu; “a piece of consecrated ground was passed, on which were mounds of stone, with a rude idol, dressed with a turban and the Feejee hairpins. The idol was surrounded by clubs set up edgewise, and many spears, arrows, trinkets, cocoa-nuts, &c., lay around, which had evidently been placed there as offerings. A large party of natives, who were with our gentlemen, on seeing them approach it, deserted, excepting a man and boy, who, contrary to the others, seemed anxious for them to partake of the offerings which lay about, and offered to sell the idol, which was bought for a paper of vermillion. Neither of them, however, could be tempted to touch a single article himself, although they had no objection to our gentlemen doing so. On the next day, Mr. Peale returning from his jaunt, took his purchase and carried it on board.”<sup>20</sup> This figure bought by Mr. Peale is probably the one in the United States National Museum in Washington about which the following is said in the original catalogue: “Idol obtained in consecrated grove at Sandal Bay — Island of Vanua Levu, where a numerous party of natives had been slain and eaten. Many were set up and ornamented with turbans, hair pins, and the arms of the dead, around the mound where this Idol was placed. None of the natives could be persuaded to approach the spot.”<sup>21</sup> (Fig. 4.)

In the United States National Museum there are also some other Fijian “idols” collected on the exploring expedition during 1840. These figures are mentioned in our list of museum specimens.

In a chapter about “the customs of the Feejee group” Wilkes has the following general remarks: “The deities . . . are served by priests, called ambati, who are worshipped in buildings denominated mbure, or spirit-houses. Of such buildings each town has at least one, and often several, which serve also for entertaining strangers, as well as for holding councils and other public meetings. In these mbures, images are found; but these, although much esteemed as ornaments, and held sacred, are not worshipped as idols. They are only produced on great occasions, such as festivals, &

<sup>19</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. I. P. 122.

<sup>20</sup> Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. Pp. 227 f.

<sup>21</sup> USNM. Letter, 6.8.1956.



Fig. 6. Two wooden figures from Vanua Levu. H.: 43.1 and 47 cm. — USNM 2996.

c.”<sup>22</sup> I think it is worth while to give Wilkes’ own note about the sources used in this chapter: “Our information . . . was obtained from personal observation, from the statements of the natives themselves, and from white residents. I also derived much information from the missionaries, . . .”<sup>23</sup>

Charles Wilkes’ “Narrative” was printed in 1844 and a passage in the Appendix of Walter Lawry’s “Friendly and Feejee Islands. A missionary visit . . . in 1847” where Fijian human figures are mentioned is merely a quotation of what Wilkes here has said.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. P. 91.

<sup>23</sup> Ib. Vol. III. P. 77.

<sup>24</sup> Walter Lawry, *Friendly and Feejee Islands. A missionary visit . . . in 1847*. London, 1850. Appendix. P. 274.

*Rev. Joseph Waterhouse,*

who in 1854 witnessed the conversion of Mbau to Christianity says about the happenings: "On the 8th of May the temples began to be spoiled of their ornaments. One of their deities, the god of rain and fair weather, was brought in triumph to me. The Heathens from the large land<sup>26</sup> predicted my death."<sup>26</sup> Nothing is here said definitely about a figure of human form.

The word idolatry is sometimes used by the missionaries, but often in a general and vague meaning. Rev. William Wilson at Viwa near Mbau says in his journal for March 1856: "We called at Na Kalawaca and made inquiries when they intended building a chapel? They asked whether it would do to repair the heathen temple, and use it for the worship of Jehovah? To this, for the present, I assented on the understanding that it was to be purged of all vestiges of idolatry."<sup>27</sup> Rev. R. B. Lyth records in his journal from December 1849 a visit to Vulanga in Lau: "Vulanga first received the *lotu* (i. e., Christianity) about two years ago. Tui Vulanga led the way. . . . I counted six gods formerly worshipped at Vulanga, the principal of which bore the name of the king, Tui-Vulanga, and he was his priest — but they have cast them to the moles and to the bats, to be remembered no more."<sup>28</sup> The expression "to the moles and to the bats" may here best be interpreted as a metaphor.

*Julius L. Brenchley,*

commander of H. M. S. "Curaçoa," who paid a visit to Levuka on Ovalau in 1865, met there an old sailor of the name of Russell who "to my surprise, brought me two old wooden goddesses — native idols, dressed in long baby cloths, with very flat faces, mother-of-pearl eyes, with their sexual characteristics clearly defined and very remarkably developed, observing, as he handed them to me, 'Aint it curious that these people should worship such things as these; I can't make it out.' The costume of these divinities was an addition of his own."<sup>29</sup> Levuka was the center for the white population of Fiji in these days.

<sup>26</sup> Obviously Viti Levu.

<sup>27</sup> Joseph Waterhouse, *Vah-ta-ah. The Feejeean princess: with occasional allusions to Feejeean customs; and illustrations of Feejeean life.* London, 1857. Pp. 152 f.

<sup>28</sup> MMS. Extracts of William Wilson's journal. Fiji letters 1856.

<sup>29</sup> MMS. Extracts of R. B. Lyth's journal. Fiji letters 1850.

<sup>29</sup> Julius L. Brenchley, *Jottings during the cruise of H. M. S. Curaçoa among the South Sea Islands in 1865.* London, 1873. Pp. 146 f.

*Three periods of culture contact*

The discoverer of Fiji was Abel Janszoon Tasman who in 1643 passed through the northeastern fringe of the Group. He had no contact with the natives and we have to wait until the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, especially, to get information about Fijian life. Our sources — all of them obviously observations in situations of culture contact — are particularly rich at three periods.

1) The period of visiting sandalwood ships and later on bêche de mer ships, during the first three decades of the 19th century. The journal of William Lockerby, sandalwood trader in Fiji 1808—1809,<sup>30</sup> is one of our sources from this period. James Oliver's (and W. G. D.'s) account of the "Wreck of the Glide" belongs to the same sort of documents. A similar work but from the next period is Mary Davis Wallis' "Life in Feejee."<sup>31</sup> Her husband was captain on a barque engaged in the bêche de mer trade but she also lived for some time with the Wesleyan missionaries. Good accounts of heathen Fiji, before the arrival of the missionaries, are among the logbooks or journals from the bêche de mer vessels now at Salem, Mass., in the Peabody Museum. Among the authors of these journals are John H. Eagleston and Joseph W. Osborn. Capt. Eagleston and another Salem sea-captain Benjamin Vanderford were both on the Wilkes' expedition visiting Fiji in 1840. Their knowledge of Fijian ways of life — documented in the Salem archives — may have been another important source used by Wilkes in his "Narrative."

2) The period of the early Christian missions to Fiji particularly during the 1840's. Thomas Williams' "Fiji and the Fijians" is the classic of this period. The Wesleyans began their work among the Fijians, in the Lau Group, as early as 1835 and the Marist Fathers arrived in 1844. A lot

---

<sup>30</sup> *The journal of William Lockerby, sandalwood trader in the Fijian islands 1808—1809.* Works issued by the Hakluyt Society. Second series. No. LII. Issued for 1922. London, 1925. — The activities of whalers in Fijian and Tongan waters during the first half of the 19th century should be studied in detail from the accounts of the log-books, particularly for the benefit of students of Fijian material culture. Some of the most interesting problems in Fijian ethnography are related to the occurrence of sperm whale teeth from whaling ships. However, the best and hitherto nearly only accounts of Fijian affairs during the first decades of the last century are — the records by the explorers excluded — from sandal wood and bêche de mer traders; so the whalers have been omitted in our account. This does not mean that we are not aware of their importance in Fijian cultural change. The whaling industry was established in the South Pacific about 1800 and Wilkes records a visit of whaling ships at Kandavu in 1840. (Derrick, *A history of Fiji.* P. 70.)

<sup>31</sup> *Life in Feejee, or, five years among the cannibals.* By a lady. Boston, 1851.

of old letters and journals of the Wesleyan missionaries are kept in the archives of the Methodist Missionary Society in London and in the Mitchell Library in Sydney. For the historian it is important to know that it is sometimes possible to get two personal records of the same happening in these letters and journals.

3) The period around the cession of the Group to the British Crown in 1874. During the 1870's we get new information, especially about the interior of Viti Levu. This is the period of the administrators and naturalists. Berthold Seemann, the botanist, however, visited Fiji as early as in 1860 and 1861.<sup>32</sup> Also the missionaries, now able to work in the interior hill tracts of Viti Levu, enlarge our knowledge about Fiji and the Fijians. Among the administrators, Sir Arthur Gordon, later Lord Stanmore, is well known. He was governor of Fiji 1875–1880. Among naturalists we have Theodor Kleinschmidt working for the Godeffroy Museum in Hamburg. At this time Baron Anatole von Hügel, later on curator of the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge, also travelled extensively in Fiji. Sir Arthur Gordon and the Baron collected the bulk of what is now the splendid Fijian exhibit of that museum.

#### *White settlers*

Three categories of people have thus been opening up new vistas for research: the sea captains, the missionaries — also the Catholic ones — and the administrators and explorers. Among explorers we have not only men such as Kleinschmidt, in the 1870's, but also the commanders of the exploring expeditions. We have mentioned Wilkes already. Others are Bellingshausen, with his account of the natives of Ono-i-Lau from 1820, and Dumont d'Urville, in Fiji twice, both in 1827 and in 1838.

There is a fourth group: the white settlers. They are seen as beach-combers in the beginning of the century — the legendary Charles Savage, is the classic example. He met a tragic death — he was eaten by cannibals on Vanua Levu in 1813.<sup>33</sup> Most of these men from the beginning of the 19th century were useful to the native chiefs for their knowledge of firearms and local navigation.

Later on a white settlement grew up in Levuka on Ovalau. When Fiji

<sup>32</sup> Berthold Seemann: *Viti: an account of a government mission to the Vitian or Fijian Islands.* Cambridge, 1862.

<sup>33</sup> Peter Dillon, *Narrative and successful result of a voyage in the South Seas, performed by order of the Government of British India to ascertain the actual fate of La Pérouse's expedition, interspersed with accounts of the religion, manners, customs, and cannibal practices of the South Sea islanders.* London, 1829. Vol. I. P. 18.

in 1857 had its first British consulate established, Levuka had about 30 white settlers. Some of them lived with native women and most of them were engaged in a petty trade of bêche de mer, turtle shell and coconut oil.<sup>34</sup> David Whippy, an American, had as early as 1842 been in Fiji for nearly 20 years. He met Wilkes, the commander of the U. S. exploring expedition in 1840 and was afterwards appointed U. S. vice consul at Levuka.<sup>35</sup>

By 1870 Fiji had got many new immigrants, the cotton growers. These settlers had Levuka as a kind of market town where they could trade and enjoy social life. They spent most of their time on their plantations in different parts of Fiji. The arrival of these planters caused another — temporary — immigration, of South Sea labourers, to Fiji, most of them from the New Hebrides, particularly Tanna. Labour vessels toured the Melanesian islands to the west. The Fijians themselves were not much attracted by plantation work. The Fijians who came were in most cases from the Ra and Mba districts of Viti Levu. Working on the plantations these Fijians got weapons that afterwards could be used for defence against the Kai Tholo, the hill peoples of Viti Levu. According to de Ricci's "Fiji," published 1875, about seven-eighths of the imported labourers were from the New Hebrides. Some were from the Gilbert Islands in the north and there were men from the Solomon Islands and the Banks Islands.<sup>36</sup>

The following passage of H. Stonehewer Cooper's "Coral lands" published in 1880 gives an interesting glimpse of Levuka life during the 1870's from

<sup>34</sup> J. H. de Ricci, *Fiji: our new province in the South Seas*. London, 1875. P. 187. — Osborn, clerk of the "Emerald", writes in his journal of the ship's voyage to Fiji 1833—36: "It (Lebouka) is the chief residing place of the white men, there are now twelve belonging to the settlement, there was formerly more, but some of them were killed at Cantab [Kandavu] & other places." 6.6.1834. Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass. M 656 1833 E 5.

<sup>35</sup> Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. P. 49.

<sup>36</sup> de Ricci, *Fiji*. P. 170 f. Litton Forbes, *Two years in Fiji*. London, 1875. Pp. 77—80, 217, 249. Cotton-growing increased rapidly after 1865. From the British Consular Report of 1866 de Ricci records that "three years back there were only two cotton gins and one windmill in all Fiji, at the present date there are about 30 gins and five steam-engines." (*Fiji*, p. 196.) Brenchley was in 1865 told that there were "60 Whites in the island (Ovalau), and 350 in the whole group;" cotton was cultivated in Ovalau and at Rewa "on a certain scale" by several foreigners. (*Jottings during the cruise of H. M. S. Curaçoa*. Pp. 145 f.) *The Cyclopaedia of Fiji (illustrated)*, Sydney, 1907, tells us: "From 1866 cotton displaced the cocoanut oil trade as the premier industry of Fiji. These were the days of boom times, . . . when the European settlers, estimated at 400 at the end of 1866, quintupled their numbers within the ensuing two years." (P. 162.) — About the labour traffic, i. e., importation of labourers from other South Sea islands, J. E. Brookes says in a modern work that "the practice evidently became well established at Fiji in 1864. By 1865 the British consul there was giving the traffic indirect sanction by issuing special sailing letters to labor vessels." (*International rivalry in the Pacific islands 1800—1875*. Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1941.)

the view-point of ethnographic specimens: ". . . the honest 'beach-comber' . . . of the Fiji provinces, is not at all above manufacturing relics for Levuka, Sydney, or 'home.' The trade in 'curios' is a very important one all over the Pacific, and there are several shops in Levuka devoted almost entirely to their sale."<sup>37</sup>

### *Theodor Kleinschmidt*

visited Fiji in the 1870's.<sup>38</sup> He collected ethnographical objects and specimens of value for natural history and he certainly did not belong to the visitors buying most of their Fijian objects in a Levuka shop. Objects collected by him and sketches and observations by him show him as one of those who knew a good deal about the interior of Viti Levu. In a manuscript kept in the Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte in Hamburg Kleinschmidt says: "In Viti Levu scheinen aber besonders die aus Walzahn geschnitzten Doppelgötzen viel gegolten zu haben, da dort vier Exemplare dieser Götzenbilder gefunden oder erbeutet wurden, die sich im Besitz von hohen Govt. Beamten (Gov. Gordon, Mr. Thurston, Dr. McGregor) befinden. . . . Herr Dr. McGregor sagt mir, dass sein Exemplar von Namosi stamme und ihm von Roko Matena tambua (dem Nachfolger des grossen Häuptlings Kuru Ndua Ndua . . .) gegeben worden sei und dass man Mc Gregor gesagt habe, dass man den Besitz dieses Götzenbildes und dessen Verehrung während der letzten sieben Generationen noch nachweisen könne, was eben beweist, wie sehr man auf dieses Bild achtete und es verwahrte."<sup>39</sup>

Of the double figures mentioned two are now in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology and the third one — the McGregor specimen — in Marischal College, Aberdeen. The fourth figure — if there is a fourth one — we do not know anything about. The Marischal College figure — like the two in Cambridge in the form of a suspension hook — had, according to the museum catalogue in the college, "been used by eight generations of a family in Namosi."<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 7.)

<sup>37</sup> H. Stonehewer Cooper, *Coral lands.* London, 1880. Vol. I. P. 129.

<sup>38</sup> According to Kurt Schmack: *J. C. Godeffroy & Sohn, Kaufleute zu Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1938; p. 190) Kleinschmidt was in Fiji 1875—76. From his *Reisen* (in the *Journal des Museum Godeffroy*) we know also of a Fijian letter of his from 1877 and his drawing of the *mbure* at Rokorokoyawa to be found in our article about the Fijian conch shells, is from 1878.

<sup>39</sup> Th. Kleinschmidt, Manuscript in the Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte, Hamburg.

<sup>40</sup> MC 11<sup>1</sup>.



Fig. 7. Double whale tooth figure in hook form. Namosi, Viti Levu. H.: 11.8 cm. — MC 11<sup>1</sup>.

The two double figures of the Cambridge museum — formerly belonging to Sir Arthur Gordon and to Mr. J. B. Thurston, who also became a governor of Fiji — are recorded in Theodor Kleinschmidt's "Reisen auf den Viti-Inseln, nach seinen brieflichen Mittheilungen bearbeitet" which work was published in 1879:

"Beide . . . wurden während der Kriege unter dem früheren Gouvernement Thakombau's und dem jetzigen in Viti-Levu erlangt. Nach dem Aussehen und dem dunklen Braungelb des Walfischzahns, aus dem sie gefertigt, zu schätzen, sind, sind sie jedenfalls sehr, sehr alt. Die Eingeborenen (Häuptlingsfamilien) behaupten, dass sie schon von Grossvater, Urrgrossvater und dessen Voreltern verehrt wurden, und nichts an Werth und Verehrung ihnen gleich kam. Maafu, der Kronprinz und frühere Vicekönig, soll gesagt haben, dass sich derartige Götzenbilder im Ganzen zwölf auf der Viti-Gruppe befanden. Herr Kleinschmidt theilt

die Ansicht des Herrn Thurston, dass diese Götzen nicht mit Instrumenten gemacht worden sind, welche die Vitianer kannten, sondern dass sie zur Zeit einer Völkerwanderung von Asiaten (?) gemacht wurden."<sup>41</sup>

Of the two campaigns alluded to the first was around 1873 and the second in 1876 after the cession. In both cases the rebels were people of the hill districts of central Viti Levu. J. B. Thurston had been in Fiji for a long time and among other things he had been a cotton planter. He took office under the British colonial government and became a governor of Fiji in 1888. Maafu was a Tongan chief who rivalled Thakombau — the

<sup>41</sup> Theodor Kleinschmidt's *Reisen auf den Viti-Inseln, nach seinen brieflichen Mittheilungen bearbeitet*. Journal des Museum Godeffroy. Heft XIV, Hamburg, 1879. P. 282.

Vunivalu of Mbau — in Fijian political affairs. Maafu was influential in Lau and in Thakaundrove.<sup>42</sup>

*Sir Arthur Gordon*

has a note to his figure, the "Idol from the Nadi District (Viti-Levu)" and this note is published in Kleinschmidt's "Reisen":

"Tavita to-night produced and gave to me the 'Nadi Devil,' the idol of the Nadi District. It consists of an ivory — cut out of whale's tooth and representing two women back to back with nine hooks below also of ivory. This figure represents 'Na Lila vatu,' the double wife of . . . the Chief God of Nadi, by whom it was given to an old priest . . . of . . . as a Vakadinadina of his priesthood. It or they was or were deposited in a small 'bure' enclosed in a large one of the ordinary description. Into the smaller one no man was allowed to enter. It had two doors and the figure stood generally facing both during the day, and was laid in a basket to sleep at night. It stood of itself during the heathen days but since the 'lotu' it fell down and could not be made to do anything it had done before. In olden time it spoke with a thin little squeaky voice. Luki has himself heard it when he was a boy. He was passing the 'bure' with a number of some other boys and saw the little figures standing at the door and calling after them in a thin little squeaky voice 'Maiivi ko lako?' and adds he saw them wave their hands. Though generally standing in the 'bure' they would walk about it and sometimes were to be seen at the door and sometimes up in the roof. They detected thefts, naming the thief if properly supplicated to do so, and when they wanted food, they would name a man and squeak out: So and So has not given me food lately, if he does not give food he will die of the 'Lilu.' When the Lotu had come and the virtue of the charm had departed, the image was hidden by the priest under a post in the house. There Nemani found it hidden in a hollow cocoanut-shell. He kept it at Nawaka and Tavita seems to have appropriated it from him for me"<sup>43</sup>

About an image also from western Viti Levu there is a note from the "Stanmore Papers" (by Sir Arthur Gordon). The note is made by the secretary of Sir Everard im Thurn, also a governor of Fiji, who kept the papers at the beginning of this century:

"A chief of Sabeto had a swelling on his neck; it was lanced by a doctor

<sup>42</sup> About the Mbau campaign in 1873 see: R. A. Derrick, *A history of Fiji*. Vol. I. Sec. & revised ed. Suva, Fiji, 1950. Pp. 224–227. G. Wright, *Fiji in the early seventies*. Transactions of the Fijian Society for the year 1916. Suva, 1917. Pp. 17 ff. About Thurston see: Derrick, *A history of Fiji*. P. 160. About Maafu: Ib. P. 131. If Kleinschmidt is right in speaking of two "wars" the Thurston twin figure was probably acquired during the Mbau campaign as Sir Arthur Gordon was not in Fiji at that time. Thurston's brother served in Thakombau's forces as a major.

<sup>43</sup> *Theodor Kleinschmidt's Reisen*. P. 282.

from Nadi, to whom the chief gave an image, which the doctor took back to Nadi. (The 'doctor' is a kind of native 'medicine man.') Soon afterwards, the image was entered by the goddess called Silavatu. A 'bure' (temple) was built for it, and the doctor and his heirs became the priests. Silavatu was a very dangerous goddess, who caused those who offended her to have swelled necks. The chief of Sabeto is supposed to have got the image from Tonga. The image is stated by Mr. Heffernan to be 'now in the possession of H. E. the governor of Fiji.' It would be interesting to know what became of the image."<sup>44</sup> We have now seen that this image is identical with the Nandi twin figure in Cambridge. "Silavatu" is a misreading.<sup>44a</sup>

*Rev. Arthur J. Webb,*

a Wesleyan missionary with experience also from central Viti Levu gives the following summary in a paper entitled "Fijian superstitions" from 1885: "This folk (the Fijians) did not deify the wind, the rain, the sea, the lightning, or the thunder, the rocking earthquake, or the silver moon.

---

" Communicated by Mr. R. A. Derrick, Curator of the Fiji Museum, Suva, in a letter of 30.7.1957. The parenthetical explanation of "doctor" is by Mr. Derrick.

"a The bulk of the records referred to by Mr. Derrick as the "Stanmore Papers" seems to be in Cambridge. Not long ago looking through *Sir Everard im Thurn's Papers* in the possession of the Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society in Edinburgh I found a bundle of documents called "Notes on Stanmore Papers." These notes were made by Arthur G. Hayward for Sir Everard in 1912 and among them there are some original documents in Heffernan's writing. Hayward arranged the "Stanmore Papers" and at the same time made his notes which are now in Edinburgh. His arrangement is recorded in his notes and this makes it possible for us to identify a lot of documents kept in the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge as the "Stanmore Papers" alluded to in this context. These papers were not written by Sir Arthur Gordon, Lord Stanmore, but by E. C. B. Heffernan. Missing in Cambridge is Heffernan's note about Lilavatu. Somehow this note has been kept in the im Thurn papers. It reads as follows: "About thirty [later added, fifty] years ago, a chief of Sabeto called Nayawaelagi having a swelling in his neck, sent for the Doctor to lance it. When the operation was performed Nayawaelagi gave Na Vuniwai the tabua image afterwards called Lilavatu to him as his fee. Navuniwai took it to Nadi — his town — where it was soon after entered by a Goddess called Lilavatu. A buri was built for it. Navuniwai and his heirs became its priests. Lilavatu was a very dangerous Goddess, giving people who entered her bury swelled necks, or if enough food was not presented to her, causing people to die, or be killed in war. The Sabeto people are supposed to have got the image from Tonga. Lilavatu is now in the possession of His Excellency the Governor of Fiji." A comparison shows that the note given to us by Mr. Derrick is, almost word by word, the same as the one by Hayward in Edinburgh, but this is based on Heffernan's document quoted here. And Hayward misinterpreted "Lilavatu" and wrote "Silavatu." — It may be worth recording that *lila* was the name of an epidemic which according to Fijian tradition was contemporary with the arrival of the first European ships in the archipelago about the end of the 18th century. For a discussion of this disease and the traditions about it see: *Colony of Fiji, Report of the commission appointed to inquire into the decrease of the native population*. Suva, 1896. Pp. 30, 33—36.

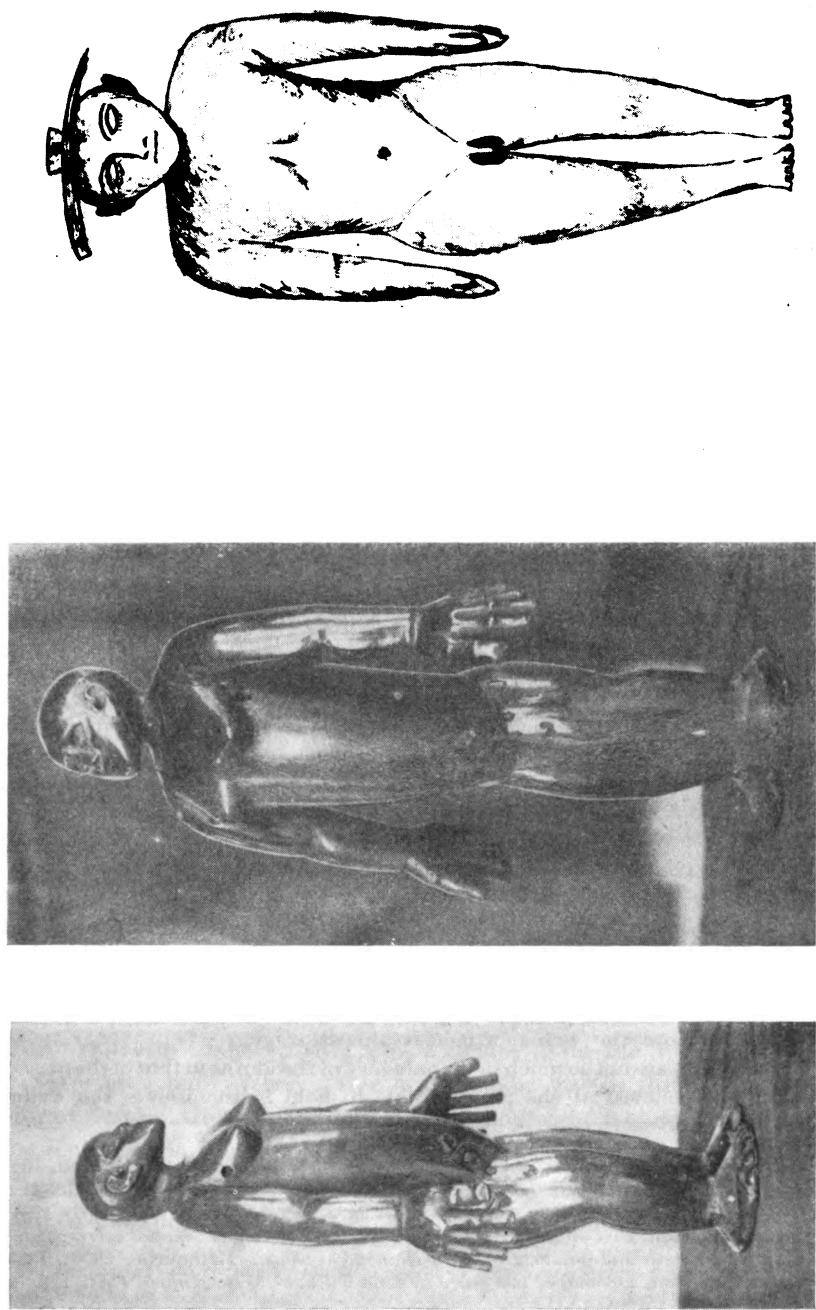


Fig. 8. *a*, Andi Waimaro, *b*, sketch of an "ivory" figure seen on the Wainimala, Viti Levu.

The natural phenomena were not divine, but were under the control of divinities. Nor did the Fijians worship idols! They had a few carved figures, which were not gods, but ornaments of houses or canoes. The powers were spiritual. But there came in the doctrine of Possession. The gods would tenant some form in nature, from which they were, however, acknowledged to be quite distinct, and would dwell in the shark, etc. . . .<sup>45</sup> Henry Britton has written a pamphlet, "Fiji in 1870," where he mentions that "there were some carvings of battle-axes, and other war implements in bas-relief on the level stone pavement" in the heathen village of Na Koro Tambu.<sup>46</sup> He has also written a "story of old Fiji," "Lolóma, or two years in cannibal-land" (1883). It is a work of fiction but said to be partly based on the notes of a missionary, Rev. Jesse Carey. In the book is a description of a village called "Ramaka," two day's sailing from Mbau. "The old temple of Ramaka was rebuilt to propitiate the deities. . . . The temple furniture was as sacred as the temple itself." In the temple was among other things a "wooden-face," or idol.<sup>47</sup>

*Rev. W. Deane,*

who had been principal of a Wesleyan college for native teachers in Fiji published in 1921 a work called "Fijian society." He says:

"There are no true idols in Fiji. Nor did the Fijian attempt to carve his god to any form. It was sufficient for him if something mysterious were to happen in connection with a rock or tree in order to constitute it as divine."

". . . we have no worship of idols, as such. I happened to discover, however, one very curious exception to the rule. There are, at the present time, in the keeping of the Wáimáró tribe in Dhólo, Viti Lévu, two ivory images, male and female. They are about nine inches in height, and are made of carved whale's teeth, no fewer than six teeth being used in the construction of each. It is doubtful whether the Fijians made them. They were probably executed by sailors from the whalers which used to ply in these waters, for the pieces of ivory are held together by pins of lead very carefully inserted. The figures are exquisitely polished, and, though grotesque, are wonderfully well carved. The expression on the woman's face is almost tragic.

"These figures are not so much in the category of the idol as in that of the mascot. For they are believed at the present time to hold in themselves the welfare of the clan, and especially of the high-born line.

<sup>45</sup> Arthur J. Webb, *Fijian superstitions*. Victorian review, vol. 12. Melbourne, 1885. P. 400. Webb does not give any new facts in his account of Fijian "idolatry." It looks as if he were recording common views in a literary way.

<sup>46</sup> Henry Britton, *Fiji in 1870: being the letters of "The Argus" special correspondent, with a complete map and gazetteer of the Fijian archipelago*. Melbourne, 1870. P. 58.

<sup>47</sup> Henry Britton, *Lolóma, or two years in cannibal-land: a story of old Fiji*. London, 1884. Pp. 127 f.

"Visitors are not welcomed who wish to see the curious little ivory chief and chieftainess of the Wáimáró tribe, as the couple are ostentatiously called. Whether this reticence on the part of the owners is due to the fear that the presence of strangers detracts from the virtue of the mascot, or whether it arises from an inordinate desire to extort money from the inquisitive, I cannot say. Probably, both these reasons are in the native mind. At any rate, ordinary folk are not allowed to view the ivory pair unless some gift is made to the chiefs.

"A friend and I were fortunate in being allowed to see, and actually photograph, the female. We entered the house where it was kept and the doors were carefully closed behind us. The chief then went to a hiding-place near the mat-bed, and, after a little rummaging, he drew the image forth. But, before he showed it to us, he anointed it gently and tenderly with the oil of the cocoa-nut tree, as if it were alive, and decorously bound a silk handkerchief about its loins. Then we were allowed to examine it at our leisure.

"The chief told us that it had been brought from Réwa to Sóloirá, and thence to the chiefs of Wáimáró, who had retained it ever since. The custom subsequently grew up of eating some chiefly food before viewing it. He also informed us (and the man evinced every sign of credence in his statement) that, if a stranger touches the image, he will have no more children, and, if a boy as much as looks upon it, he forfeits his power to propagate offspring.

"The *andi ni Wáimáró* (Chieftainess of Wáimáró), as the image is called, is still preserved as a sacred thing. A gift of twenty pounds was offered some time ago for it, but the chief would not hear of selling his treasure. The figure appeared to be a godlet, fetish, and symbol combined."<sup>48</sup>

Deane refers to a photo of the female image but this is not to be found in his book. We can instead publish two photos (fig. 8 a) of this figure taken by Mr. R. C. G. D. Higginson, formerly District Commissioner of the Province Tholo East and stationed at Vunindawa on the Wainimala River in Viti Levu. Mr. G. K. Roth had the photos in his Fijian notes and he generously handed them over to me. Mr. Higginson was so kind as to give us his permission to their publication. In a letter to Mr. Roth, dated 26th November, 1958, he says:

"As regards the figure you ask about I always understood the name to be 'Adi Waimaro.' I heard that Tui Waimaro is on the Waidina but I have never seen him. When I saw her first she was in the care of Buli Soloira at Serea. After all had left the *bure* one night he and the District Scribe took a trade Box, and after opening about three inside one another the Buli took out a bundle of oily rags which he unwrapped and showed me Adi Waimaro. Later it was brought over to Vunidawa and I photo-

<sup>1</sup> <sup>48</sup> W. Deane, *Fijian society or the sociology and psychology of the Fijians*. London, 1921. Pp. 65 & 69 ff.

graphed it on my verandah. This was about 1913. Adi Waimaro is made of five pieces of whales' teeth pegged into place. No one could say where it came from or who made it but the general opinion was that it had been made by some European. The arms and legs are mortised in and fastened with *vesi* pegs which were showing slight signs of age. I cannot remember the height but I would say between 8 to 12 inches. I believe the Soloira people regarded her as their *Vu*, and probably they are also connected with the Waidina people." *Vu* means here ancestress.

If we compare the two descriptions of *Andi Waimaro* we find that the height is on the whole the same, 9 and 8 to 12 inches respectively. According to Deane six teeth had been used for the construction of the figure, Higginson records five pieces.

Mr. Roth has also supplied us with a sketch of an "ivory" image which maybe is Tui Waimaro (fig. 8 b). He got it in 1932 from G. T. Barker who saw the figure "either at Matalobau or Wairua on the Wainimala in 1892." Barker remembers "saying at the time to the owner that it was too wide to have been made out of a whale's tooth." The following description of the image is given by the sketcher: "No fingers carved on hand, only rudimentary thumbs. Toes square, only four on each foot. Cap, loose fitting, was the outside cut off a whale's tooth. Figure about 1½ inches through abdomen. Eyeballs not raised. Penis uncircumcised. Surface roughly finished." Barker says also: "it is so long ago that I am not now sure of the width of the figure, . . ."

According to tradition this image was given by Ratu, the Verata chief, for help in the war against Bau.

Mr. Roth himself thinks that he has seen the image at Vunindumba, Tholo East, in the house of Ratu Iferemi Tavetani.

The loose fitting "cap" seen on the image is probably some kind of a disc similar to what we find on suspension hooks.

*Figures in human form collected in Fiji or supposed to be from the Group*

Designation	Place and time of collection (Collector)	Time of acquisition	Overall height of specimen in cm	Sex M = male F = female	Remarks	Published
<i>Wooden figures (the so-called oil-dishes in human form are not included).</i>						
1 USNM 2898, orig. 1816	Sandal Bay, Vanua Levu 1840 (Wilkes)		38.7	F	One of the ebonies.	Linton & Wingert, Arts of the South Seas. P. 21.
2 USNM 2896, orig. 1817	Vanua Levu 1840 (Wilkes)		43.1	M		
3 USNM 2896, orig. 1818	Vanua Levu 1840 (Wilkes)		47	F	Feet on part of a base with dowel.	Krieger, Design areas in Oceania. Pl. 23, where nos. 1 & 4 are also seen.
4 USNM 3275, orig. 1819	Rewa, Viti Levu 1840 (Wilkes)		105.7 (figure: 94)	M	Vesi, Intsia bijuga.	Linton & Wingert, Arts of the South Seas. P. 20.
5 USNM 3000, orig. 1573	Fiji 1840 (Wilkes)		68.9 (figure smaller)	F	Hook with detachable disc above figure.	
6 (MMS) C-U.M.A.E 57.D.3	Belonged to R. B. Lyth, in Fiji 1839-1854.		46	F	Marks on the lower part of the abdomen Base as on the hooks.	
7 RSM	Fiji	1865	12		T-shaped prop, carved from the solid piece, projecting behind figure.	
		1868.79.5				

Designation	Place and time of collection (Collector)	Time of acquisition	Overall height of specimen in cm	Sex M = male F = female	Remarks	Published
8 C-UMAE Z 2812	Fiji about 1875 (von Hügel)		33	F		Barrow, Man 56. P. 166.
9 C-UMAE Z 2869	Rewa, River, Viti Levu about 1875 (von Hügel)		52	F	Given by a halfcaste girl from Mbau as her portrait.	Barrow, Man 56. P. 166.
10 C-UMAE Z 3773	Fiji about 1875 (Knollys)		32.5	M	Hook with detachable disc above figure.	Barrow, Man 56. P. 166.
11 C-UMAE Z 3775	Vunimbau, Vanua, Viti Levu about 1875 (von Hügel)		42 (figure: 28)	F	Hook. Detachable disc missing.	Barrow, Man 56. Pp. 166 f.
12 C-UMAE Z 2879	Matai Lombau, Viti Levu about 1875 (von Hügel)		20	M?	Head cut from large image. "Head of a male figure."	Barrow, Man 56. P. 167.
13 CM E.177.7		1877 from W. Floyd, Levuka, Fiji 1890	139.7	M	<i>Ndamana</i> , Calophyllum Samoanese.	
14 NMV 2530	Fiji		62.2	F	Marks on lower part of abdomen. Legs terminating in two dowels.	
15 OC 599 a	Fiji (Canon Wickstead)		46	M	Hook without a detachable disc.	JPS Supplement, Me- moir 15. P. 46. Pl. 66.

Designation	Place and time of collection (Collector)	Time of acquisition	Overall height of specimen in cm	Sex M = male F = female	Remarks	Published
16 OC 599 b	Fiji (Canon Wicksteed) "New Hebrides"	1912 from W. Schmidt, a German engineer in Australia	51.4	F	Hook without a detachable disc.	JPS Supplement, Memoir 15. P. 46. Pl. 66.
17 L-MfV Me 10849			66	F	Hook without a detachable disc.	Scheller, Ethnologica V. P. 116.
18 L-RvV 335-32		1882	84	M	Mother-of-pearl shells as eyes.	Collection "Le Musée vivant", No. 38. "L'art océanien." P. 96.
19 Rousseau coll., Paris			66	M		
<i>Tree fern figures.</i>						
1 C-ES I.a.74	Fiji	1891	114		Tambus on breast.	Vatter, Religiöse Plastik der Naturvölker. P. 66.
2 C-ES I.a.75 a	Fiji	1891	127		Eyes of wood.	Vatter, Religiöse Plastik der Naturvölker. P. 66.
3 C-ES I.a.75 b	Fiji	1891	114.5		Tambus on breast.	One of the 5 Copenhagen figures is published by Bahnsen in "Etnographien", vol. I. 1894. P. 205.

Designation	Place and time of collection (Collector)	Time of acquisition	Overall height of specimen in cm	Sex M = male F = female	Remarks	Published
4 C-ES I.a.75 c	Fiji	1891	105.5		Tambua on breast. Eyes of wood.	
5 C-ES I.a.75 d	Fiji	1891	103.5		Tambua on breast. Eyes of wood.	
6 PR II.67	Fiji (B. Thomson)	1896	109		Eyes of metal discs.	
7 BM 1932.6	Fiji (B. Thomson)	1932 (1896)	105		Eyes of metal discs.	
<i>Figures of sperm-whale tooth. (If not of whale tooth see under "Remarks.")</i>						
1 MPA 57.108	Viti Levu 1868 (C. G. Hawdon)	1957	13.3	F	Small suspension lug in the back of the head. "Of walrus tusk."	The Museum of Primitive Art. Selected works 4. Pl. 22.
2 MC 11 <sup>1</sup>	Namosi, Viti Levu the 1870's (McGregor)	1920	11.8	F	Double figure in hook form.	Primitive Arts of the South Seas. Pl. 8, facing p. 17.
3 C-U.MAE 25.336	Fiji before 1900	1925	10.8	F	Small suspension lug at Barrow, Man 56. one side of top of head.	Kleinschmidt, Reisen. P. 282. Tafel 16.
4 C-U.MAE 55.247	Nandi, Viti Levu about 1875 (Gordon)	1955	12.3	F	Double figure in hook form.	Lehmann, ZfE 66. P. 263. Scheller, Ethnologica V. P. 117. Barrow, Man. Pp. 165 f.

Designation	Place and time of collection (Collector)	Time of acquisition	Overall height of specimen in cm	Sex M = male F = female	Remarks	Published
5 C-UMAE Z 2740	Fiji about 1875 (Thurston)		17.8	F	Double figure in hook form.	As above, but for Barrow, p. 166.
6 C-UMAE Z 2752	Fiji about 1884? (Lady Gordon)		7.4-9.6	F	Necklace of eight small figures.	Barrow, Man 56, p. 167.
7 P-UUM 18194	Fiji (C. D. Voy)	1891	20		Left arm and shoulder pinned on.	Linton & Wingert, Arts of the South Seas, p. 19.
8 P-UUM 18194	Fiji (C. D. Voy)	1891	11.4	M	The back of the head pierced for a suspension cord. Of bone probably from a whale	
USNM:	United States National Museum, Washington.			C-ES:	Etnografisk Samling, Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen.	
MMS:	Methodist Missionary Society, London.			PR:	Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.	
RSM:	Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.			BM:	British Museum, London.	
C-UMAE:	University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge.			MPA:	Museum of Primitive Art, New York.	
CM:	Canterbury Museum, Christchurch.			MC:	Anthropological Museum, Marischal College, Aberdeen.	
NMV:	National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne.			P-UUM:	University Museum, Philadelphia.	
OC:	Oldman Collection.					
L-MFV:	Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig.					
L-RvV:	Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leyden.					

## LITERATURE:

Ralph Linton & Paul S. Wingert, *Arts of the South Seas*. New York, 1946.

Herbert W. Krieger, *Design areas in Oceania based on specimens in the United States National Museum*. The Proceedings of the United States National Museum. Vol. 79, art. 30. Washington, D. C., 1932.

T. T. Barrow, *Human figures in wood and ivory from western Polynesia*. Man. Vol. 56, pp. 165–168. London, 1956.

*The Oldman collection of Polynesian artifacts. Tonga, Samoa and Fiji Groups*. Supplement to the Journal of the Polynesian Society. Vol. 48, no. 3. Memoir 15. Wellington, 1939.

Andreas Scheller, *Aufhängehaken aus Indonesien und der Südsee*. Ethnologica. Vol. 5. Pp. 73–171. Leipzig, 1941.

*L'art océanien. Sa présence*. Collection "Le Musée Vivant," No. 38. Paris, 1951.

Ernst Vatter, *Religiöse Plastik der Naturvölker*. Frankfurt am Main, 1926.

Kristian Bahnsen, *Etnografien fremstillet i dens hovedtrek*. Vol. I. Copenhagen, 1900.

*Selected works 4*. The Museum of Primitive Art. New York, 1958.

*Primitive arts of the South Seas*. The Arts Council of Great Britain. (Exhibition catalogue.) N. d.

*Theodor Kleinschmidt's Reisen auf den Viti-Inseln, nach seinen brieflichen Mittheilungen bearbeitet*. Journal des Museum Godeffroy. Heft XIV, Hamburg, 1879.

F. R. Lehmann, *Prophetentum in der Südsee*. Zeitschrift für Ethnologie. Vol. 66. Pp. 261–265. Berlin, 1934.

## WOODEN FIGURES

It has been difficult to get information about the different kinds of wood used in the Fijian images. In general, it is possible to say that the Fijians use hard woods when they carve. As is well known the Melanesians often use soft wood in contrast to the Polynesians. In this characterization of Fijian wood work the tree fern figures are not included. As far as the material is concerned the tree fern figures have their counterparts in the New Hebrides and in the Banks Islands, to mention the nearest places. The wood technologist of the United States National Museum, William Watkins, has supplied me with information about two figures collected by Wilkes in 1840: the figure from Sandalwood Bay with the "turban" on its head (no. 1) (fig. 4) is perhaps cut out of one of the ebonies and the male figure on the plank, from Rewa, (no. 4) (fig. 9), is of *Intsia bijuga* — also called *Afzelia bijuga* and by the Fijians *vesi*. Dr. R. S. Duff, Director of the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, has told me that the wood of the tall figure in his museum (no. 13) (fig. 10) is *Calophyllum Samoanense* or *Burmanii* (Fijian name, *ndamanu*).<sup>49</sup>

About the carving of the wooden figures we have no record, but Thomas Williams informs us that the Fijians before they got iron tools mostly used a stone adze. "Various modifications of this tool were all the Fijian had with which to hew out his posts and planks, to cut down trees, or make the nicest joints, or, together with shells, to execute most marvellous carving. Fire-sticks and long spines of echini supplied his boring apparatus. With rats' teeth set in hard wood he executed his more minute carving or engraving, and for rasp or file he still uses the mushroom coral, or the shagreen-like skin of the ray-fish, and pumice-stone for general finishing purposes." Plane-irons, fixed and used "after the fashion of the old stone adze" and other implements of European or American manufacture soon superseded the old tools around the middle of the last century.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> USNM. Letter, 31.8.1956. CM. Letter, 8.6.1957.

<sup>50</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Pp. 78 f.



Fig. 9. Male wooden image in high relief. Rewa. Overall height (board included): 105.7 cm. — USNM 3275.

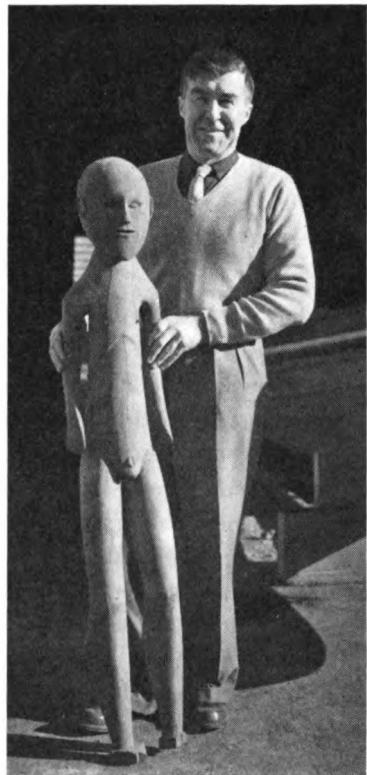


Fig. 10. Male wooden image. H.: 139.7 cm.—CM E. 177.7.



Fig. 11. The back of the head of the Christchurch figure.

### Size groups

The wooden figures can be arranged according to their sizes. The tallest one is the image in the Canterbury Museum at Christchurch with a height of 139.7 cm (no. 13) (fig. 10). This figure was brought to New Zealand from Fiji in the 1870's and the head (no. 12) (fig. 18) collected by von Hügel at Matai Lombau on Viti Levu in the same period may have belonged to a figure of the same size. The style of the heads shows similarities. A peculiarity of the Christchurch figure is a long narrow elevation — quadrangular if seen in cross-section — running obliquely on the back of the head (fig. 11). The catalogue entry for this image is as follows: "Wooden idol (human figure) from native temple, Fiji." It was presented by Rev. William Floyd, a Church of England clergyman, about whom we know that he went to Fiji in 1868 and first settled as a cotton grower at Ndreketi River

on Vanua Levu. He moved to Levuka in 1870 and began his work there as a parson for the white population and as a missionary among the Melanesian labourers.<sup>51</sup> The image was draped with a short *Pandanus* leaf "kilt" which has been identified as Fijian by Dr. Duff. As Floyd worked among the Melanesians there is reason to be suspicious of the Fijian origin of the figure. However, the Matai Lombau head stylistically like the head of the Floyd figure supplies us with some evidence and I wonder whether the Melanesians during their stay in Fiji had any "temples."<sup>51a</sup>

Next in size is the figure in high relief from Rewa collected by the Wilkes' expedition (no. 4) (fig. 9). The height of the figure is 94 cm and

Fig. 12. Small wooden image with a T-shaped prop behind. H.: 12 cm. — RSM 1868.79.5.

<sup>51</sup> C. W. Whonsbon-Aston, *Levuka days of a parson in Polynesia*. London, 1936. P. 19. Letter from Rev. John D. Dixon, Sydney, 30.8.1957.

<sup>51a</sup> We know now that this figure had markings on the face. Mr. G. K. Roth has kindly shown us a letter which he got from Dr. Duff in 1938 and the author says there: "Another point which might establish a Fijian identification is that the countenance has been stained with black patches, two convergent patches running from brow to chin, and two from ear to chin." A sketch of the countenance to show the patches was enclosed in Dr. Duff's letter.

of the board of which the image is a part, 105.7 cm. The board is nearly 4 cm thick and there are three holes along one side which could be used in lashing to some other member. Some carvings in low relief are also to be seen on the board. This "idol" was obtained from "the chief of the spirit-place."<sup>52</sup>

This figure is of *vesi* as is the other known figure of a similar kind: the image on the Williams' drawing of the *mbure* at Somosomo (fig. 2).

Measuring just the figures and not taking into account parts belonging to them, as for instance hooks, show that Williams' description of "grim, immodest representations of the human figure, about eighteen inches long" gives a good average for an important size group. The image given by Williams to Captain Jenner was of the same size: a foot and a half. Seven items in our list of wooden specimens have figures with heights between 40 cm and 50 cm. Another group — three specimens — has figure heights around 30 cm. The smallest specimen is the image in the Royal Scottish Museum, height 12 cm (no. 7) (fig. 12).

### *"Mbui ni Kauvandra"*

In the group of figures around eighteen inches, nearly 46 cm, one of the most interesting is the image from the Methodist Missionary Society in London now on loan in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (no. 6) (fig. 13). This figure was probably lent by its owner, Rev. R. B. Lyth, to the Gunnersbury House Museum from which some of the objects have been transferred to the Methodist Missionary Society in London. On the back of the figure is a label with the following text in the hand-writing of the Rev. Lyth: "Bui ni Kauvandra — a Fijian goddess." "Bui ni Kauvandra" means "the old woman of Na Kauvandra." The height of the figure is — the base-block included — 46 cm. The lower parts of the abdomen have marks which might represent hair or tattoos. Tattooing of the private parts around the vulva was earlier — as far as we know — a common custom among Fijian women. About 1875 it was still practised in the heathen districts of Viti Levu. Girls were tattooed before marriage.<sup>53</sup> The patterns were, "as a rule, mere interlacing or parallel line and lozenges."<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> USNM. Letter, 6.8.1956

<sup>53</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. P. 160. Th. Kleinschmidt in: Schmeltz and Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abtheilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg*. Pp. 182 ff. — Osborn in his journal of the "Emerald's" voyage to Fiji 1833—36: "The married [Fijian] women are tattooed round the middle & some of them have a spot at each corner of the mouth. The women in one district of the Fegrees called Rah, tattoo the upper lip, . . ." Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass. M 656 1833 E 5.

<sup>54</sup> Basil Thomson, *The Fijians. A study of the decay of custom*. London, 1908. P. 217.

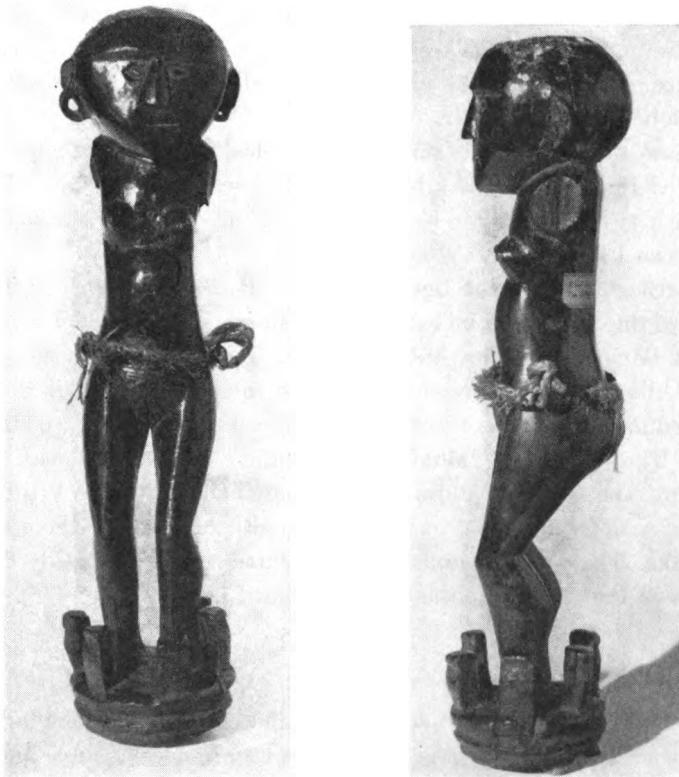


Fig. 13. "Mbui ni Kauvandra." H. 46 cm. — (MMS) C-UMAE 57.D.3.

On the top of the head is a coating of a resinous mass<sup>55</sup> which is also found as a stripe on the lower part of the occiput, just above the neck, and around the vulva. One wonders if some kind of hair was attached to the figure. If hair has been attached to the coat around the vulva it may be a bit superfluous to think of the lower abdominal marks as representing hair — and not tattoos; in case the figure has been made once for all which is perhaps to be proved.

Around the waist of the image there is a small *liku*, the fringed waist-band worn by women in Fiji, with the fringes in this case mostly worn away.

<sup>55</sup> It has been difficult to find any possible break under the head coating showing trace of a lug as in the other suspension hooks.

The head of a small nail makes a navel. The arms are missing. Both sexes used ear ornaments in Fiji<sup>56</sup> and the lobes of the ears of the "goddess" have holes. Of the two Wilkes' figures — male and female — from Vanua Levu (nos. 2 & 3) (fig. 6) at least the male image shows vestiges of a pierced lobe in the right ear.

The base of the image is similar to the blocks on Jian hooks with incorporated figure. The block has obviously been broken off as it has been fixed with two modern screws from below. The surface of the image is dark brown to black, and glossy.

The earlier owner of the figure, the Rev. R. B. Lyth, arrived in Fiji at the end of the 1830's and he left in 1854. Most of his time as missionary he spent at Somosomo, Viwa and Lakemba. He was at Somosomo in the early 1840's. But the missionaries visited more parts of Fiji than those they lived in and we do not know yet whether Lyth had collected the image himself. The expression "Mbui ni Kauvandra" does not help us to locate the image. The Na Kauvandra Mountains are in northeastern Viti Levu and Ndenegei — the leading god of the Fijian pantheon — dwelt there in a cave as a snake. The Na Kauvandra is at the same time regarded by Fijians in all parts of the archipelago as their ancestral home.

#### *Face profiles, eye and ear forms*

I think the material is too scanty for valid comparisons. As far as style is concerned some parts of the face on the two figures — male and female respectively — collected on Vanua Levu (nos. 2 & 3) (fig. 6) are similar to what is seen on the "Mbui ni Kauvandra": the marking of the eyes with scores giving the eye a convexo-convex outline; the jutting out of the lower part of the forehead; and the plain pyramidal form of the nose situated just below the forehead.

The jutting out of the forehead — or perhaps better expressed as a carving where eyes, nose and mouth stand out in relief from a lower surface — gives a typical profile of some of the figures collected in Fiji, for instance the suspension hook with incorporated figure from Vunimbau on Viti Levu (no. 11) (fig. 14). This is also the typical face profile of the so-called oil-dishes in human form found in Fiji (fig. 39).

In some other wooden figures — for example the small item from Edinburgh (no. 7) (fig. 12) — the face is flat and the eyes are small tapering holes. Whether anything was placed in these we do not know. The nose

---

<sup>56</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. P. 159.



Fig. 14. Wooden suspension hook with female figure. Vunimbau (near Navua on the south coast of Viti Levu). H.: 42 cm. — C-UMAE Z 3775.

is formed by the two "eye-sockets" and a narrow groove running from the sockets and below the nose. The form thus obtained is curvilinear: two circles making the eyes or encircling them continue in two tangents making the two sides of the nose. In this way it is possible to relate — typologically — the face of the small figure with the rounder face of the head found at Matai Lombau in Viti Levu (no. 12) (fig. 18).

One of the smaller hardwood figures from Fiji (no special provenience within the archipelago is given) is no. 8 (fig. 15). The face is also flat on this image but the peaked head form gives it a special place among the human figures collected in Fiji. The flat surface of the face is perpendic-



Fig. 15. Wooden image. H.: 33 cm. — C-UMAE Z 2812.

ular not oblique, but with the chin a bit more forward, as in the Edinburgh figure (no. 7) (fig. 12). The eyes are also in this case two round holes. These eye-holes are unrelated to the two ridges — making a "T" and marking the lower part of the forehead and the nose. The ears are indicated in a more "abstract" form, just as two ridgelike tips. Tips of a more conical character make the ears of the Rewa River image which according to our information was given to von Hügel by a "half-caste *kai loma*" girl at Mbau as her portrait (no. 9) (fig. 16). The face of this figure — if the information is correct, a creation in a situation of culture contact — has the eyes carved in a special style giving the outer contour of the eye-socket a square form.

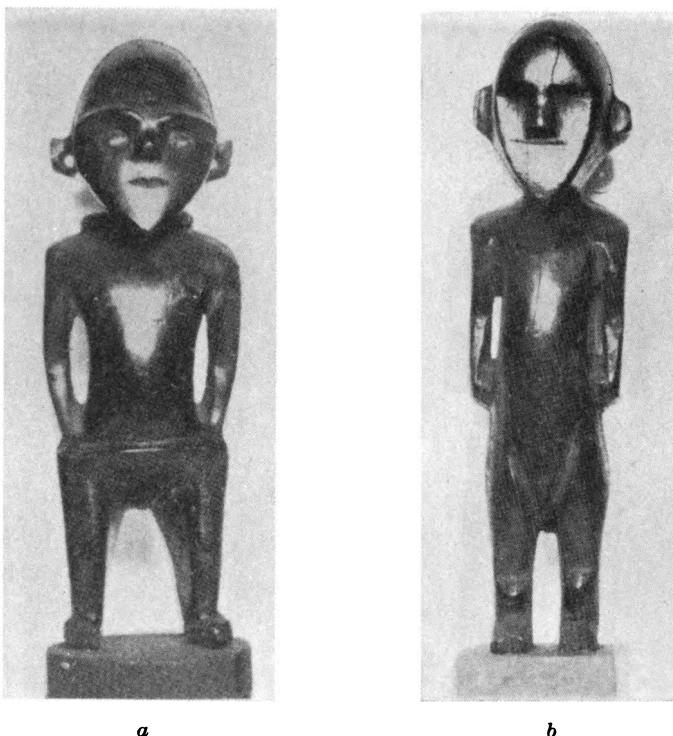
The eyes of the image collected at Sandal Wood Bay (no. 1) (fig. 4)



Fig. 16. Female wooden figure from the Rewa River. — H.: 52 cm. — C-UМАЕ Z 2869.

have a horizontal score which is seen also on wooden figures from Tahiti. More important, however, is to find the same trait on a Tongan wooden image kept in Marischal College, Aberdeen (fig. 28), and this figure can be related to the Oldman collection specimen (fig. 26) where the eyes are marked with scores only.

Another image tempting us to comparisons is the Cambridge figure with the peaked head (no. 8) (fig. 15). It reminds one of an image in the Oldman Collection, no. 426, said to come "probably from the Harvey Group." This figure and another one (no. 364) in the same collection, and without known locality, have to be considered in future research. The raised triangular shape of the lower part of the abdomen on the Cambridge figure is interesting and is also found on the image said to come probably



**Fig. 17. a.** Female figure "probably from the Harvey Group." H.: 18.4 cm. Oldman Coll. no. 426. **b.** Human figure without known locality. H.: 27.9 cm. Oldman Coll. no. 364.

from the Harvey Group. This image had eyes inlaid with small convex shells. (Fig. 17 a.)<sup>57</sup>

A distinct ear-form is shown on the rat-safe figure collected by Wilkes (no. 5) (fig. 21): two ribs, the upper one shorter, meet at an angle creating a hook form. Similar in style is the left ear on the male figure from Vanua Levu, also collected by Wilkes (no. 2) (fig. 6). This ear form is found on the famous Tonga figure with a flat face which belonged to the Oldman

<sup>57</sup> *L'art océanien. Sa présence.* P. 96. (Coll. Cook, Institut für Völkerkunde, Göttingen.) F. Hewicker and H. Tischner, *Oceanic art*. London, 1954. P. 31. Pl. 90. (British Museum.) This British Museum figure is also published in: Gerd Koch, *Die Kunst der Südsee*. Fig. 1. p. 279 in: Hans Weigert (ed.), *Kleine Kunsts geschichte der Vorzeit und der Naturvölker*. Stuttgart, 1956. — *The Oldman collection of Polynesian artifacts. Tahiti, Austral, and Cook Groups*. Supplement to the Journal of the Polynesian Society. Vol. 47, no. 185. Memoir 15. Wellington, 1938. P. 6. Pl. 8.

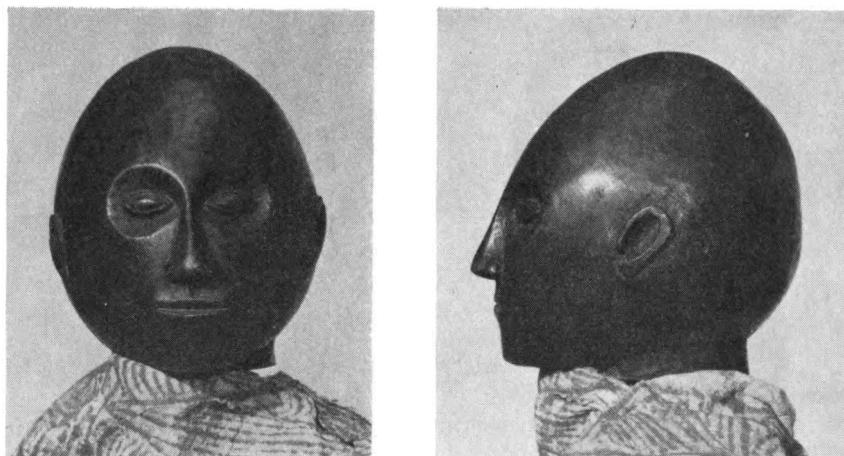


Fig. 18. Wooden head from Matai Lombau, Viti Levu. H.: 20 cm. — C-UМАЕ Z 2879.

Collection and was from the Ha'apai Islands (fig. 26). A more "naturalistic" way of rendering the ear is found on the Matai Lombau image-head (no. 12) (fig. 18) and especially on the head of the *vesi* figure from Rewa (no. 4) (fig. 9).

#### *The Melbourne image*

One female figure with marks on the lower part of the abdomen has been described already: the "Mbui ni Kauvandra." Lower abdominal marks are also found on another figure now on show in the National Museum of Victoria in Melbourne (no. 14) (fig. 19). This image is taller. The legs terminate in two dowels — making it possible to have the figure standing from a foundation of some kind — and the height with the dowels is 62.2 cm. The marks representing hair or tattoos are zigzag lines in low relief similar to those seen on Fijian clubs. One arm is missing but the hand of the remaining arm has the spread pointed fingers typical of the priests' oil bowls in human form. The eyes are marked by convexo-convex holes. Mr. A. Massola, Curator of Anthropology in the Melbourne museum, says that "there are no signs of anything ever having been placed in the eye-sockets".<sup>58</sup> Giving this figure a special character is the rendering of the

<sup>58</sup> Letter, 12.7.1957.

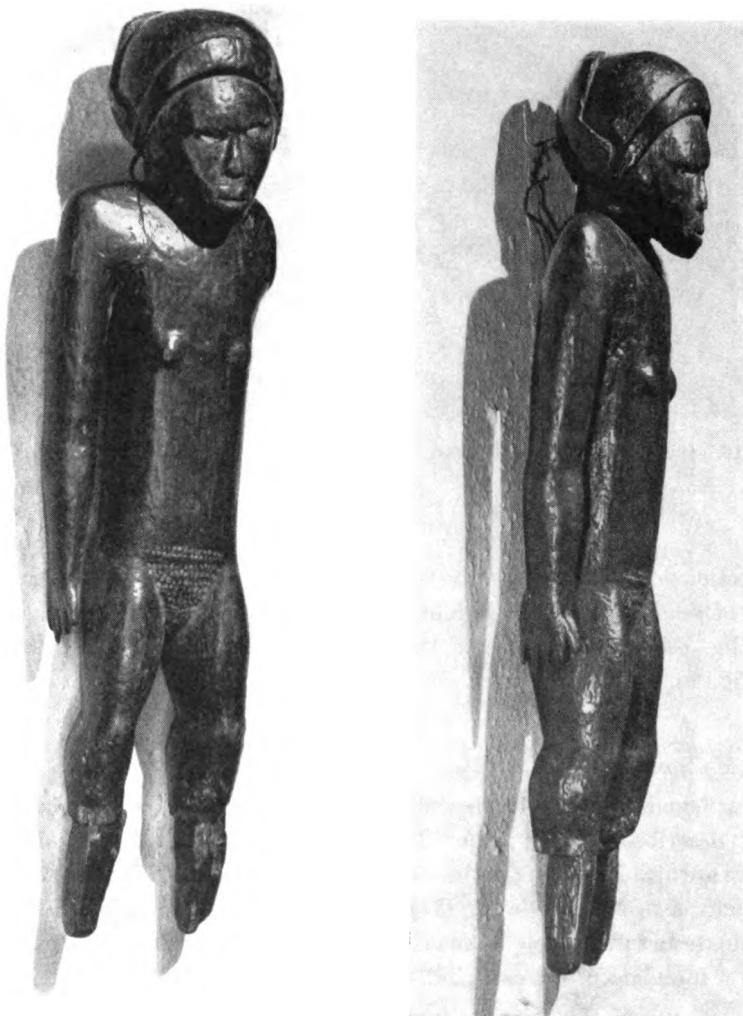


Fig. 19. Female wooden figure. H.: 62.2 cm. — NMV 2530.

mouth. A comparison with the "old woman of Na Kauvandra" is striking: in one case a straight narrow score, in another two carved lips. We find carved lips also on the wooden oil dishes in human form.

It has been impossible to get the wood identified, but Mr. Massola has been so kind as to give us the information that the figure — according to



Fig. 20. Wooden suspension hook with male figure. H.: 32.5 cm. — C-UMAE Z 3773.



Fig. 21. Wooden suspension hook. H.: 68.9 cm. — USNM 3000.

his view — is of the same wood as that which the throwing clubs are made of. The patination is black; the figure is highly polished, made of dense heavy wood.<sup>59</sup>

The head is adorned by a carving that suggests the rendering of a hair-dressing style. The problem is that hair-dressing in Fiji was particularly the concern of men, especially the chiefs. Williams says, however: "Married women often wear their hair in the same style as the men, but not projecting to quite the same extent."<sup>60</sup> The best examples of images with renderings of hair-dressing — or perhaps head dresses — are the tree fern figures.

The small breasts of the Melbourne figure are typical of some other female figures, the breasts sometimes being no more than breast-nipples. So in the Cambridge figure Z 2812 (no. 8) (fig. 15) and in the Vunimbau hook (no. 11) (fig. 14) where the navel is carved similarly and the three knobs create a pattern. Breast-nipples on a male image are seen in the Cambridge hanger Z 3773 (no. 10) (fig. 20).

---

<sup>59</sup> Letter, 29.7.1957.

<sup>60</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. P. 159.

### TREE FERN FIGURES

The tree fern figures make a unit as a size group. The smallest of them is 103.5 cm and the tallest 127 cm. These figures are rather rare and I do not know of any more specimens — undoubtedly from Fiji — than the seven images in our list. The two specimens in England were both collected by Basil Thomson and that means at the end of the last century. The Pitt Rivers Museum got them both in 1896 and one of them the British Museum got afterwards as an exchange. The Etnografisk Samling of the National Museum of Copenhagen got their images in 1891, but I have not been able to get first-hand information about when they were collected in Fiji.<sup>61</sup> About the tree fern, more abundant in windward than leeward Fiji, Berthold Seemann has the following to say: "One of the most common tree-ferns, the Balabala (*Alsophila excelsa*, R. Br.), is much used for building purposes by the natives. Its trunks make excellent posts, lasting an incredibly long time, and possessing moreover the advantage of being almost fire-proof. After a house has been burnt down, these posts are almost the only trace that remains. It is also customary to make the ridge pole of houses and temples of this tree-fern, and to surround it with the Wa-Kalou (holy creeper), a species of that curious genus of climbing ferns (*Lygodictyon*), . . . The trunks of the Balabala, cut into ornamental forms, are frequently observed around tombs, temples, churches, and bures, presenting a pretty effect. The little sticks which the chiefs carry, stuck under their turban, and with which they scratch their heads, are also made of Balabala."<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> The Copenhagen figures were all given to the National Museum by the Commodore P. H. Braëm who, however, had not collected them in Fiji. He had got them from someone else. His daughter's son, Vice-Admiral A. H. Vedel has been so kind as to give me his opinion on this question. He thinks that the figures were brought from Fiji about 1880-85 at the earliest. Letter, 31.10.1958. About one of the images the museum records have the following to say: "One of the half-gods or guardian-spirits (*kalou yalo*) of the Fiji Islanders." Unfortunately, we do not have any more information making it possible to know whether this description is from the natives themselves and if this is the case, in which situation it has been used.

<sup>62</sup> Seemann, *Viti*. Pp. 366 f.

According to John Horne, another botanist, who was called in to Fiji by Sir Arthur Gordon when he was a governor, trunks of tree ferns were used also for making fences around the native towns to keep pigs out. Miss Gardner King who paid a visit to Fiji in this century says that house-posts of the trunks of tree-fern are "most ornamental. The surface has the appearance of black velvet."<sup>63</sup>

The tree fern figures of Fiji present a problem. We do not have any really first-hand information about the specimens in the museums and it is difficult to know the exact meaning of Seemann's words, "cut into ornamental forms." Our best information is given by Sir Arthur Gordon. The house in coast style which he saw in a mountain village of Viti Levu had fern root logs terminating the gables and these logs — i. e., the ends of the ridge-pole — had carvings resembling human heads and human figures.<sup>64</sup> As the square houses of interior Viti Levu had no ridge-pole seen from the outside — there was a small one in the inside of the house<sup>65</sup> — it is natural that we find no carvings on these houses.

Carvings on the ends of the ridge-pole are also found in Lau. In the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford there is a photo from the 1910's taken by A. M. Hocart and showing a school house at Lakemba.<sup>66</sup> This house, with rounded gable ends and representing the third house type of Fiji, has carvings on both ends of the ridge-pole. It is impossible to see from the photo whether the carved ends are of tree fern.

It is tempting to think of the tree fern figures as specimens from the last half of the 19th century and as a result of the immigration of labourers from the Banks Islands to Fiji. The Banks Islanders were good tree fern carvers and in the catalogue of the Godeffroy Museum we are told that the people of Gaua brought tree fern figures to Fiji. Thus concerning two

<sup>63</sup> John Horne, *A year in Fiji: or an inquiry into the botanical, agricultural, and economical resources of the Colony*. London, 1881. P. 126. Agnes Gardner King, *Islands far away*. London, 1920. P. 27.

<sup>64</sup> Sir Arthur Gordon, *Fiji: records of private and public life, 1875–80*. Edinburgh, 1912. Vol. IV. P. 289: "...carved into the resemblance of birds, or grotesque heads, human, canine, or porcine, or grotesque human figures." — When our account of the tree fern figures was already written we came upon a picture showing the native church at Suva in 1870 which seems to be of some significance. This picture is in A. B. Brewster's "King of cannibal isles" (London, 1937, facing p. 82) and it is from a sketch by the author's sister. The native church which probably belonged to the Wesleyans, is in the picture surrounded by rows of stumps — of tree fern I should say — and at the corners are posts which look like our tree fern images. It is possible to discern heads of a similar kind as on our museum figures.

<sup>65</sup> Kleinschmidt's unpublished manuscript in the Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte, Hamburg. Photo of interior of roof of house from Nambutautau by Hocart. Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, B. 524 (Q).

<sup>66</sup> PR B. 770 (Q).

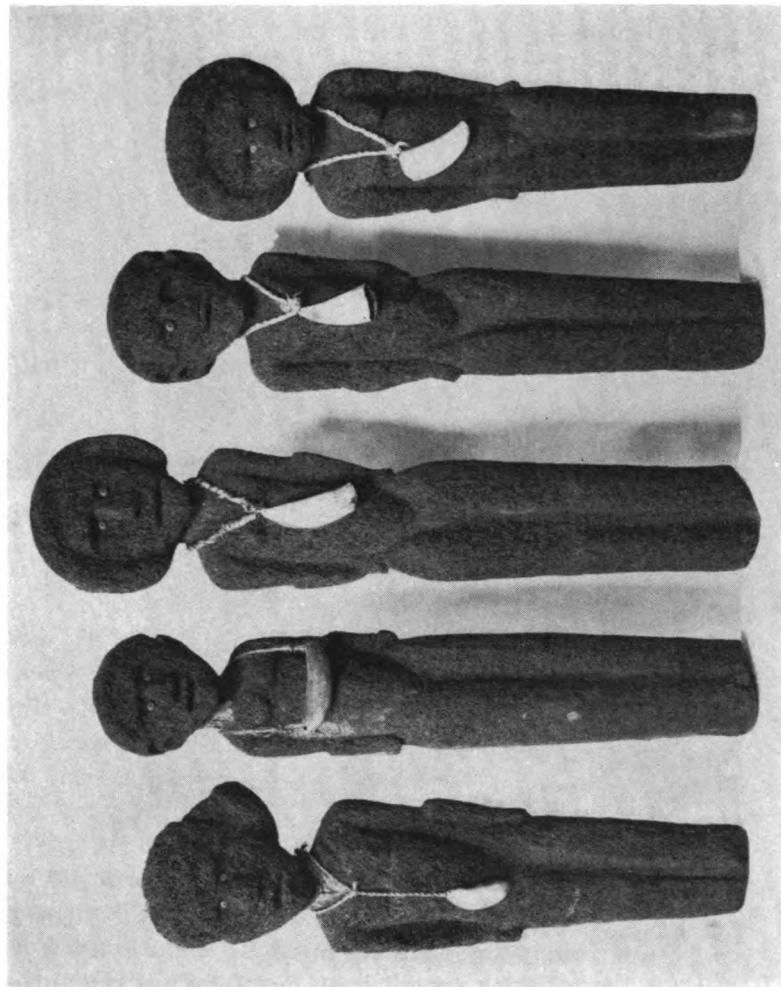


Fig. 22. The tree fern figures in the National Museum, Copenhagen. Heights: between 103.5 cm and 127 cm. — C-ES I. a. 75 c, 74, 75 a, 75 b & 75 d.



Fig. 23. The tallest Copenhagen figure  
in profile.

Fig. 24. Tree fern figure. H.: 109 cm.  
— PR II.67.

figures from Gaua the following remark is given: "Dieselben werden an den Thürfosten der Häuser befestigt und sogar von den als Plantagenarbeiter nach Viti kommenden Eingeborenen dorthin mitgeführt."<sup>67</sup> The Fijians could have got the idea of carving in tree fern from the labourers.

<sup>67</sup> Schmeltz and Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abtheilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg.* P. 120.



Fig. 25. Schoolhouse from Lakemba. Photo by Hocart in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

As we know that the two British specimens were collected by Basil Thomson these figures are rather late at least if we consider the time of their collection.<sup>67a</sup> And the Copenhagen images were presumably not brought to Europe much earlier. If they had been collected before the arrival of the Melanesian labourers we could have refuted the hypothesis that the tree fern figures were a Fijian result of culture contact in modern times.

What is interesting is the distinct style of the tree fern images — with the “big heads” rendering the Fijian in a more naturalistic manner than when just bare heads were carved on the figures in most cases. In one sense there is more of Fiji in the tree fern figures. At the same time we might mention that one of our oldest specimens — the Rewa plank figure (no. 4) (fig. 9) has a head similar to those on the tree fern figures.

<sup>67a</sup> Basil Thomson came to Fiji in 1884. B. Thomson, *The scene changes*. Garden City, N. Y., 1937. Pp. 21 ff.

### THE TONGAN IMAGES

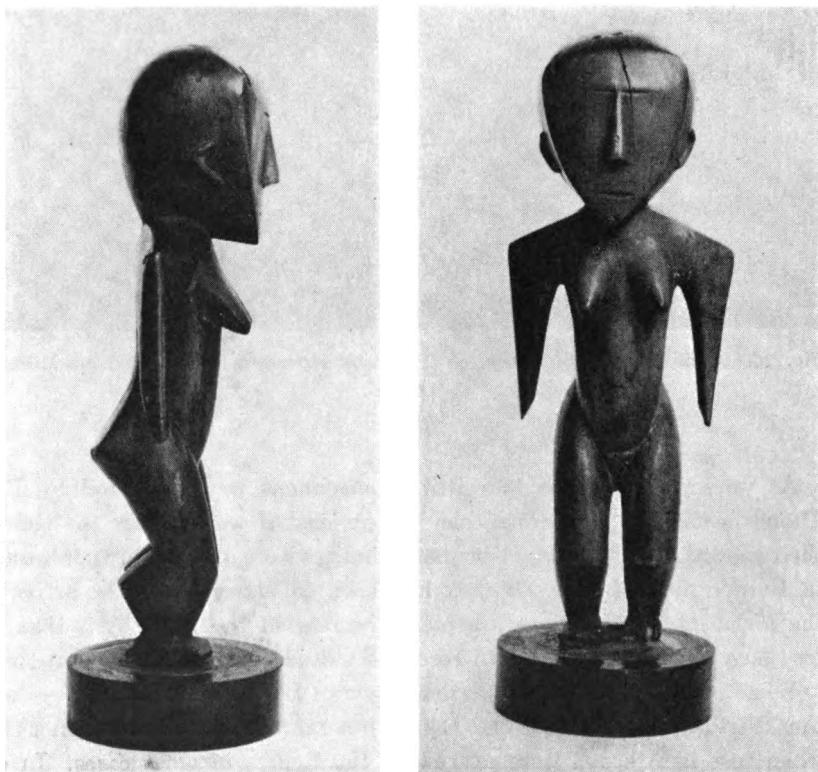


Fig. 26. Tongan female figure of wood. Ha'apai. H.: 37.4 cm. — OC 530.  
Auckland Institute and Museum.

Before discussing the whale tooth figures in Fiji it may be helpful to get an idea of what the Tongan figures in general look like and to record what we know about them, especially as Fijian whale tooth images have been treated as Tongan in style. At the same time I would like to emphasize

that Fiji and Tonga can be regarded as one area of communication. We know that in historical times particularly Tongans went to Fiji and that Lakemba in Lau had a Tongan settlement when the missionaries arrived in 1835. The Tongan infiltration in Lau was the channel also for the Christian mission, Christian Tonguese were used as native teachers in Fiji. In an area with established channels of communication it may seem difficult sometimes to differentiate between what is Tongan and Fijian.

The drawing of a female figure called a goddess in John Williams' "A narrative of missionary enterprises" — published in 1837 — is well known.<sup>68</sup> The image in Williams' book has been identified by W. O. Oldman and Peter Buck as being the same as a wooden figure in the Oldman Collection (no. 530) (fig. 26).<sup>69</sup> It has been possible for me to get more documentation about the Tongan figures in the journal of Rev. John Thomas, a Wesleyan missionary in Tonga from 1826. Writing in Lifuka — the principal island of the Ha'apai group — on 12th February 1830 he says: "I have 4 of the Tonga Gods brought me to day, by the Chief. These he says the people have till lately worshipped. They are venerable for age, but the worms have made sun inroads upon them, so that some of them are very much injured and independent of this their rottenness they have lost all respect among the people. They now cast them away as a thing of nought, if not to the Moles and to the bats, yet to the worms and the fire. The houses they once possessed some are now inhabited by the people. Others are quite destroyed."<sup>70</sup> And on the 11th June the same year Thomas writes: "I called upon the Chief, found him busy writing. In looking round I perceived 5 wooden Images, or Tonga Gods suspend(ed) by their neck

<sup>68</sup> John Williams, *A narrative of missionary enterprises in the South Sea islands*. London, 1837. P. 319.

<sup>69</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa, *Additional wooden images from Tonga*. The Journal of the Polynesian Society, vol. 46 (1937), pp. 74 ff. This figure is now in the Auckland Institute and Museum.

<sup>70</sup> MMS. Journal of John Thomas, vol. 3, 12.2.1830. — In the MMS correspondence box we find the following version in an extract from Thomas' journal for February 12th, 1830: "The King brought me four Tonga gods to day, these he told me were worshipped by the people, but a little while ago; they are pieces of wood made somewhat in the likeness of human beings and chiefly of the female sex. They have a very oldfashioned appearance. I suppose they were made when Iron tools were scarce at these Islands. If I had an opportunity I would send of them to England. They are venerable for age, but the worms have made such inroads upon them that I question whether or not they would hang together until they arrive in England; however It will gladden the hearts of the friends of Mission to learn hat these Idols which were once adored as gods are now cast away as a useless thing. The Houses which were once dedicated to these Idols are now inhabited by those that worshiped them and they are now sanctified by the word of the living God and by prayer." (In a letter from Lifuka, Ha'apai, 6.8.1830.)

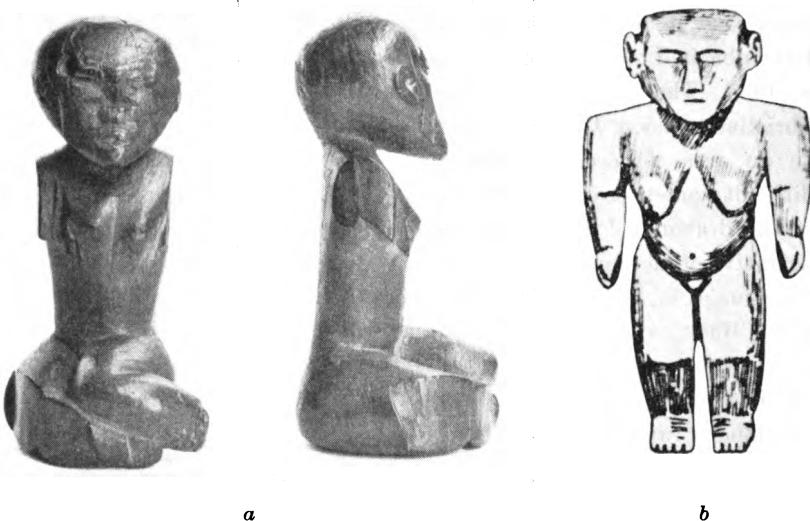


Fig. 27. *a.* Sitting wooden figure from Tonga. H.: 19 cm. — OC 532. Auckland Institute and Museum. — *b.* Ivory figure collected on Cook's voyages. H.: 6.2 cm. — Vienna Cook coll. no. 146.

to the side of his apartment. I smiled when I saw them and asked him if he had been hanging the Gods. He said yes, he had hung them up that his friends may see that they were dead, he said he would take them to the house we worship in. I told him it would be well, and heap them together that the people may see them, and learn that they yielded to the worship of God. The Chief laughed heartily at these Idols who are now fallen into disgrace." This is written in Lifuka and so is the following passage of Thomas' diary, from 9th July 1830 on the occasion of the visit by Rev. Williams and Rev. Barff: "I gave our brethren one of the Tonga Gods, and our King gave one at the request of Mr. Williams. It was one out of the 5 who the King tied up by their necks a few weeks ago in his own house."<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> MMS, Journal of John Thomas, vol. 3, 11.6. & 9.7.1830. — Taufa 'ahau presented two other Wesleyan missionaries, Revs. N. Turner and W. Cross, each one with a wooden "idol". MMS has a letter from Turner written from Tongatapu on the 3rd of September, 1830, and in this letter is an extract from the missionary's journal for 12th June the same year: "He (the Chief) has sent me a short note written with his own hand, and also a small present, including one of their former Gods — A wooden Image, of a female figure, about 18 or 20 Inches high." An extract from Cross' journal for the same day we find in a letter also from Tongatapu, dated July 1st, 1830: "He

The Chief was Taufa'ahau who later became ruler of whole Tonga as the 19th Tu'i Kanokupolu.<sup>72</sup>

Another figure localised to Tonga by documented material is no. 532 of the Oldman Collection (fig. 27 a). This is also a wooden figure, a sitting image with a height of 19 cm. On a label is written: "Household Goddess of the Emperor of Tonga and part of the dress worn by him when he worshipped the Devil."<sup>73</sup> Peter Buck says: "... as Taufaahau became the ruler of Tonga, the image evidently formed one of the group that Taufaahau abandoned in 1830."<sup>74</sup> Buck did not know about, e. g., the four images which Thomas had received.

Marischal College, Aberdeen, has in its Anthropological Museum another wooden image said to be from Tonga (fig. 28). The height of this female figure is 36.8 cm and in the catalogue it is described as "*Sakaunu, goddess.*" According to the Honorary Curator of the Museum, Professor R. D. Lockhart, no information has hitherto been discovered in the records concerning the date when it was received, nor do we know by whom it was collected. The figure is imperfect, the two arms missing.

The name of the "goddess" is rather strange, if there is no mistake in its rendering. *Sakaunu* cannot be a Tongan word as in Tongan *s* is a letter which was introduced fairly recently and which occurs almost exclusively before *i*, according to what I have been told by Mr. G. B. Milner, Lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Mr. Milner does not think either that it is a Fijian word: "there could be such a word in the (Fijian) language though I doubt whether it would have anything to do with *saka* which is usually a term of address and placed after another word as in *io, saka* (yes, sir or yes, madam)." "The only language I know of where both *s* and *k* occur (in that part of Polynesia) is that of Eastern Futuna (Hoorn Islands) between Fiji and Samoa."

A fourth figure presumably from Tonga is the small female image of

[Taufa 'ahau] sent for my acceptance a basket of citrons and an wooden Idol, one of their former Godes's. This speaks much . . . These Idols I understood were numerous at the Haabai Islands. That formerly they made them on the death of any God or Godes. That they make them to represent their Gods, and suppose that the Spirit of the Gods come into these Idols, hence they become the objects of worship & are considered most sacred." When visiting Lifuka, Ha 'apai, in July the same year Cross bought another image: "Yesterday an Image that had been the object of religious worship at an ajacent Isle was offered for sale which I procured with a few beads." Extract for the 16th of July in a letter dated the 1st of October, 1830. MMS.

<sup>72</sup> Williams, *A narrative of missionary enterprises*. Pp. 316—320. Edward Winslow Gifford, *Tongan Society*. B-BPBM 61 (1929). Pp. 87 & 91.

<sup>73</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa, *Additional wooden images*. Pp. 77 f.

<sup>74</sup> Ib. P. 78.

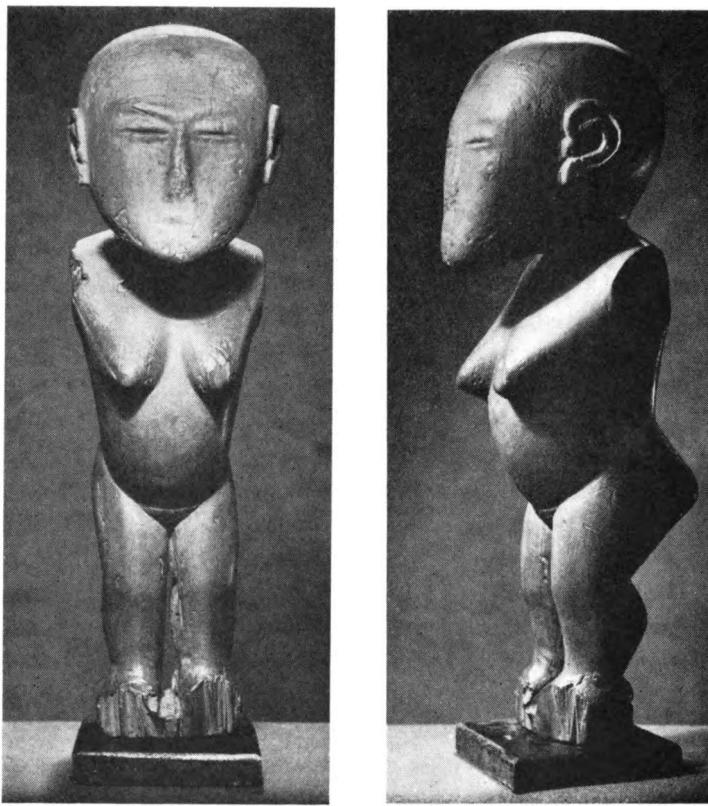


Fig. 28. Tongan female figure of wood. H.: 36.8 cm. — MC.

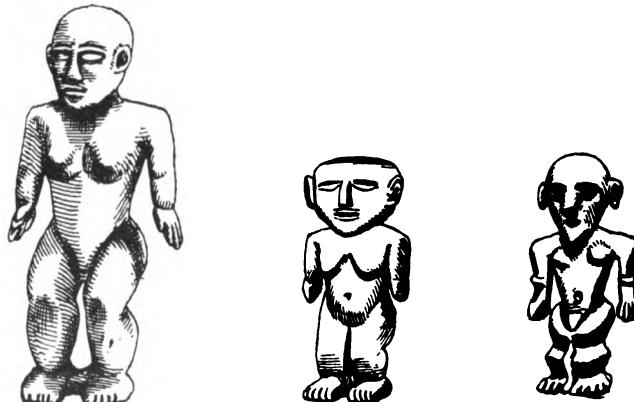


Fig. 29. Three "ivory" images in the British Museum. Sketches from catalogue cards. These images were earlier attributed to Tahiti. From the left, "Tah." 133, 134 and 135. H.: 12.1, 3.4 and 3.5 cm. Nos. 134 and 135 have vertical holes on back of head for suspension. Peter Buck associated the figures with Tonga.

the Cook collection in the Vienna Museum für Völkerkunde: a whale tooth specimen, 6.2 cm high, (no. 146) (fig. 27 b). We know that this item was collected during Cook's voyages but it is registered as coming from Tahiti in the original catalogue. A comparison with three female "ivory" images of a similar style in the British Museum (fig. 29) also registered as coming from Tahiti, but now regarded as Tongan — after Peter Buck's research about the Tongan images — resulted in a correction placing the Vienna figure among the objects from the Friendly Islands.<sup>75</sup>

On his second voyage Cook visited the Friendly Islands twice: in October 1773 for nearly a week, staying at 'Eua and Tongatapu, and in the end of June 1774 at Nomuka for a few days. On his way from this island to the New Hebrides he saw Vatoa, the Turtle Island, of the Fiji Group and landed a boat on the 2nd of July. However, the natives fled to the woods. During his 3rd voyage Cook's stay at Tonga was longer. He spent between two and three months there arriving in the end of April 1777 and departing in the middle of July. This time he visited Nomuka, Lifuka, Uoleva, Kotu, Tongatapu and 'Eua. He stayed for a month at Tongatapu.<sup>76</sup>

In 1773 Cook visited in Tongatapu "an open green, on the one side of which was a house of worship built on a mount . . ." "At one corner of the house stood an image rudely carved in wood, and on one side lay another; each about two feet in length. I, who had no intention to offend either them or their gods, did not so much as touch them, but asked Attago (a Tongan chief), as well as I could, if they were *Eatuas* or gods. Whether he understood me or no I cannot say; but he immediately turned them over and over, in as rough a manner as he would have done any other log of wood, which convinced me that they were not there as representatives of the Divinity." Later on Cook says the following about Tongan "idolatry": "But I have no idea of the images being idols; not only from what I saw myself, but from Mr. Wales's informing me that they set one of them up, for him and others to shoot at."<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Irmgard Moschner, *Die Wiener Cook-Sammlung, Südsee-Teil.* Archiv für Völkerkunde. Vol. X. Vienna, 1955. Pp. 228 f.

<sup>76</sup> James Cook, *A voyage towards the South Pole, and round the world.* 3rd ed. London, 1779. Vol. I. Pp. 191—225. Vol. II. Pp. 7—24. James Cook, *A voyage to the Pacific Ocean.* 3rd ed. London, 1785. Vol. I. Pp. 224—421.

<sup>77</sup> Cook, *A voyage towards the South Pole.* I. Pp. 198 ff., 224. On p. 201 Cook says that the "place of worship" examined was by the natives called *A-fia-tou-ca*. George Forster describes apparently the same place in "A voyage round the world" (vol. I, London, 1777, pp. 451 f.). The natives told him that a man lay buried in the house and he found "two pieces of wood a foot long, carved into some resemblance of the human figure, like those which are called *e-tee* at Taheitee, but they were treated in the same manner, being frequently trod upon and kicked about."

From his 3rd voyage Cook records a visit to a *fiaatooka*, or burying-place, at Mu'a, Tongatapu, which belonged to Poulaho (the Tu'i Tonga). In one of the houses which was open on one side, "were two rude, wooden busts of men; one near the entrance, and the other farther in." Cook was told that the images "were merely memorials of some Chiefs who had been buried there, and not the representations of any deity. Such monuments, it should seem, are seldom raised; for these had, probably, been erected several ages ago." When Cook visited this place he had Omai as an interpreter, a Tahitian who had been brought to England on the 2nd voyage and who was now on his way home. However, he is said not to have been a good interpreter.

In his general account of the Tongans from this voyage Cook relates that "ivory" is used in inlaid-works; "and they shape bones into small figures of men, birds, and other things, which must be very difficult, as their carving instrument is only a shark's tooth."<sup>78</sup>

Captain James Wilson, commander of the "Duff," visited Tongatapu twice in 1797, in April when some missionaries were left on the island and in August and September. In an extract from the missionaries' journals, for 30th May, we can read about several houses at Mu'a, "which Connally (an Irishman who lived in Tonga) said were *spirits'* houses, where they found logs of wood, stones, and bundles of rags, which were considered as spirits, being brought from the Feejee islands."

Some valuable information is given in Dumont d'Urville's "Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe." This account of Dumont d'Urville's first expedition records a stay at Tongatapu lasting for a month in 1827. Dumont d'Urville once visited Rev. John Thomas then stationed at Hihifo and saw several small houses for different spirits, "*hotouas*." He found in them "certains objets qui y ont été déposés en guise d'*ex-voto*." Dumont d'Urville visited several of these houses and in one of them only, he came upon "un gros bloc de bois grossièrement taillé en forme de tête humaine, qui paraissait du reste n'être l'objet d'aucune vénération particulière.

J. Reinhold Forster, George's father, saw probably the same images and he tells us that the Tongans "kicked the figures with their feet, to shew that they did not pay the least respect to them." The figures were called *Teèghee*. (*Observations made during a voyage round the world . . .* London, 1778. P. 566.)

<sup>78</sup> Cook, *A voyage to the Pacific Ocean*. I. Pp. 311—313, 379; 397. — J. J. de Labillardière, the naturalist of d'Entrecasteaux's expedition which visited Tonga in 1793, has a drawing of a figure from the Friendly Islands. It is in his "Atlas" and it is described as "figure grotesque d'os". Several Tongans had figures of this kind hung round their necks, so it must have been a small image. J. J. de Labillardière, *Relation du voyage à la recherche de La Pérouse*. Paris, 1800. *Atlas pour servir à la relation du voyage*. Pl. 32, fig. 22.



Fig. 30. Female wooden image without known locality but attributed to Tonga.  
H.: 33 cm. Oldman Coll. 531, now in the Auckland Institute and Museum.

Tous ces lieux sont essentiellement *tabou*; excepté certaines personnes commises à leur garde et à leur entretien, les Européens seuls ont le privilège d'en approcher."

Rev. John Thomas said on this occasion that no images of wood or stone were worshipped.

Dumont d'Urville gives the following general statement: "Les maisons des chefs, et même les maisons des dieux, sont rarement ornées de sculptures, comme à la Nouvelle-Zélande. On trouve cependant quelquefois dans ces dernières des effigies grossièrement taillées, auxquelles les naturels paraissent attacher peu d'intérêt."

de Sainson, whose drawings from the expedition are published in an "Atlas," visited at Mu'a two "*fale paléogo* (maison des esprits), où des

débris de pirogues, *ex-voto* vermolus, étaient le seul meuble remarquable." About burial places he writes as follows: "En même temps que le cadavre, on enterre à quelques pouces de profondeur des figurines en bois représentant des individus des deux sexes. J'ai eu occasion de déterrer quelques-unes de ces petites statues, et j'y ai remarqué un étonnant sentiment du dessin . . ." A drawing of these images is published and we are told that they were found in a chief's tomb at Mu'a. They were comparatively tall; a height of 2 feet 3 inches (73.1 cm) is recorded.<sup>79</sup> (Fig. 31.)

We can get more information about Tongan "idols" in a manuscript by Rev. John Thomas which is called "The Mythology of Tongans" and is kept at the Methodist Missionary Society in London. Thomas there says that the gods of the Tui Tonga family were called Faahitonga. Of them Hikuleo was placed first. He "was the nephew of the Tangaloas and the Mauis, being the son of their elder sister," and resided in Bulotu. He "was represented by the Tuitonga, as his vicegerent." The other gods were Tuibulotufekai, Eikitubu, Laufilitonga, Tuihihifo, Fatafehi, Sinaitakala, Finautauiku and the goddess Nau'aa (called Ngau'aa in another context by Thomas). The goddess "was the intercessor, by whom the gods were addressed." She is by Thomas also called "the Fahu, or privileged intercessor with the god," Hikuleo in this case.

The Faahitonga had "polished ivory shrines — called Fakafaaga which were oiled and carefully wrapped first in fine mats, and then in native cloth, and laid up aloft in the sacred house, which house was at Olotele at Mua, and in charge of a female called Feao, or companion of the gods, but the oversight of the whole was left to the Tuitonga, and his Lady the Moheofo, both were viewed as the Tauhi, or servants of the gods. This was their high office."

Thomas also enumerates the gods of the Tamaha, of the Tuikanokubolu — whose gods were called the Hau — and of the Tuihaatakalaua. About the god Taliaitubou, one of the gods worshipped by the Tuikanokubolu, Thomas says that houses were also erected to this god at other places, at Hihifo, Mu'a, Nuku'alofa and Ha'apai. "In some, if not all these houses were shrines of the god, chiefly polished ivory, or whales' teeth called fakafaaga (or something tangi[a]ble) which were carefully kept, wrapped up as the other gods hidden from the eyes of all except the companion or

<sup>79</sup> James Wilson, *A missionary voyage to the Southern Pacific, performed in the years 1796, 1797, 1798, in the ship Duff, . . . compiled from journals of the officers and the missionaries.* London, 1799. P. 252. J. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage de la corvette l'Astrolabe . . . pendant les années 1826 . . . 1829. Histoire du voyage.* Vol. 4. Paris, 1832. Pp. 82 f., 279 f., 360 & 362. *L'atlas historique.* Paris, 1833. Pl. 101.

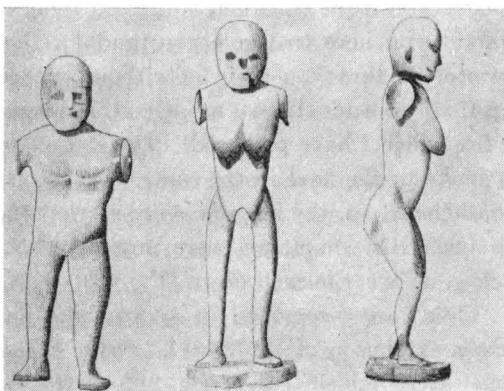


Fig. 31. de Sainson's drawing of two wooden figures from Mu'a, Tongatapu.

keeper of the god and the other sacred things; these shrines were the residences of the god and took his name. It may perhaps be noticed here, as one reason for ivory being made choice of to represent the god, that it was to the Tongans a most precious and scarce article. They had nothing more valuable, hence they gave it to the god, who was considered entitled to the best of all they had. Besides this many of the gods had what was called the hala, or way, which was a carved club — most sacred, by which the god was supposed to enter the priest. The gods we have noticed were called the gods of the Houeiki, including the Royal family and its branches of nobility upwards to the Tuitonga, they were not sought to by other chiefs."

The district and island chiefs had each their patron gods, but Thomas does not say anything about how these gods were represented. About Ha'apai the following is written which supplements what Thomas has said in his diary quoted above: "At the Haabai group which was governed by a member of the Hau family from Tonga, the same family gods were worshipped here. At Lifuka there were several gods houses, with their priests and priestesses — and up to the year 1829 the King with all his people worshipped them, as their forefathers had done."<sup>80</sup>

A vivid account of the transitional Tonga of this period is given by Sarah S. Farmer who probably got her information from Rev. Thomas for her description of the happenings during Taufa'ahau's visit to the Vava'u Group in 1831. Finau, the Vava'u ruler, "gave orders, that seven of the principal

<sup>80</sup> MMS, manuscript. Two notebooks, pp. 1-66 & 246-312. — Rev. Thomas stayed in the Tonga Group till 1850, and, for a second time, from 1854 to 1860. (Obituary notice in the Minutes of the Methodist Conference, 1881, p. 34; Hill's Arrangements (1878), p. 170.)

idols should be placed in a row. He then addressed them in language like this: 'I have brought you here to prove you; and I tell you beforehand what I am about to do, that you may be without excuse.' Then, commencing with the first, he said, 'If you are a god, run away, or you shall be burned in the fire which I have prepared!' The god made no attempt to escape. He then spoke to the next in the same way, so on till he came to the last. As none of them ran, the king gave orders that the sacred houses should be set on fire. His commands were promptly obeyed. Eighteen temples, with their gods, were burned down."<sup>81</sup>

Some Tongan "idols" are mentioned in a catalogue published on the occasion of the Paris exhibition of 1867: "211. *Faabi Fonga*. Idole adorée autrefois par le chef sacré, appelé Tui-Tonga. 212. *Eiki Tubu*, adoré par le chef sacré, la Taminaha et sa famille." These two items and another "idole de Tonga" are put under the heading of the Fiji Islands and were shown in Paris by the Wesleyans.<sup>82</sup> William O. Simpson who organized the display of the missions of the Wesleyans in Paris was obviously not very familiar with Tonga and Fiji and this, in combination with the fact that the English texts had to be translated to French, explains maybe some mistakes above.<sup>83</sup> "Faabi Fonga" is — if we follow Thomas' "Mythology" — Faahi Tonga and "Eiki Tubu" Eiki Tubu. As we find Eiki Tubu also among the gods worshipped by the Tamaha it is possible to find a correction of the curious "Taminaha." If no. 211 is a female Faahi Tonga this means Nau'aa (or Ngau'aa). It is to be hoped that some day these two "idols" will be found and identified.

If we examine critically Thomas' statements in his "Mythology" we have to admit that he is a bit vague. "Shrine of god" does not necessarily mean human image. "Polished ivory" could be just a whale's tooth.<sup>84</sup> The word

<sup>81</sup> Sarah S. Farmer, *Tonga and the Friendly Islands; with a sketch of their mission history*. London, 1855. Pp. 210 f.

<sup>82</sup> *Exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris. Section des missions protestantes évangéliques. Catalogue et notices*. Paris, 1867. Pp. 19–23. The Reverend Father P. O'Reilly, S. M., gave me this reference. — The third "idol" is registered as no. 210. "Idole de Tonga: Tui-hadjakafonna. Adorée autrefois par la famille du Haw, chef civil des îles des Amis". As no. 215 we find: "Divers objets des îles de la mer du Sud provenant de la collection du capitaine Cook." The London Missionary Society had a Fijian club on show at the same exhibition: "869. Idole en forme de massue avec trois têtes ou demi-dieux de chaque côté (Fiji)." (P. 70.) It may be asked whether this club is not similar to the Tongan ones described by Buck in his paper "Additional wooden images from Tonga," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 46: 2 (1937), pp. 78 & 80. These clubs have on the heads projecting bosses in the form of flat faces similar to those found on some images from Tonga.

<sup>83</sup> MMS. Rough Minute Book No. 5. General Committee. April 10th 1867.

<sup>84</sup> See, e. g., Gifford, *Tongan society*, p. 304, where a Lifuka god is said to have been represented by a whale's tooth (*lei*). Robert W. Williamson's "Religion and social

"idol" used in the catalogue of the Paris exhibition is also not precise, as long as we have not identified the objects. Cook is more definite when he speaks of the Tongans shaping "bones into small figures of men." The problem is whether these figures have been the "shrines of gods" which Thomas is speaking about.

As Cook and his men did not meet any Fijians at Vatoa, only saw them take to their heels, the Vienna figurine cannot have been found in Fiji. It is a reasonable hypothesis to consider this item a Tongan one. As similar images have been collected in the Fiji Group it is common sense to think of it as being from nearby Tonga and not from Tahiti.

Helping us to get a footing is the drawing of a Tongan "bone" figure in de Labillardière's "Atlas" (which we referred to earlier in a foot-note). This figure could be hung round the neck and it is therefore to be compared with the small Vienna image which has a hole for suspension on the back of the head.

Our documentation of Tongan wooden figures is better than of whale tooth images. We have two items in the Oldman collection, already mentioned, and we have Cook's own statements about wooden images. Important are also de Sainson's drawing of the Mu'a figures (fig. 31) and the wooden image in Marischal College.

Noteworthy is John Thomas' remark in his "Mythology" that Cook when he was in Hihifo — apparently on his second voyage — mistook the house at a burying-place (which he saw accompanied by Attago) "for a place of worship, or temple." About the Tonga people Thomas says in this context that they "appeared to view it a duty they owed the gods to see the burying places of their departed chiefs and friends, they also sought to their graves and prayed there in times of trouble."<sup>85</sup> As far as we can see the burying-places, according to Thomas' own information here, had a religious significance, but yet he makes a distinction, maybe because the houses did not have any "shrines of gods." I leave this an open question as I have not been able to make a thorough study of literature and documents dealing with Tongan cult houses.

---

organization in central Polynesia" (edited by R. Piddington; Cambridge, 1937) gives as a reference to "whale's tooth images, which appear to have represented gods" (p. 168) a passage in the appendix of Walter Lawry's "Friendly and Feejee Islands." The passage which is not quoted by Williamson verbatim runs, however, as follows: "The Rev. Charles Tucker says, 'I have a god, a whale's tooth, which she (the *Tamaha*) sent me; she called it her *Kui*, that is 'grandfather' or 'grandmother,' for the same term is used for both. . .'" (p. 246). Nothing definite is said here of an image.

<sup>85</sup> MMS, manuscript.

FIGURES IN MOST CASES OF WHALE TOOTH

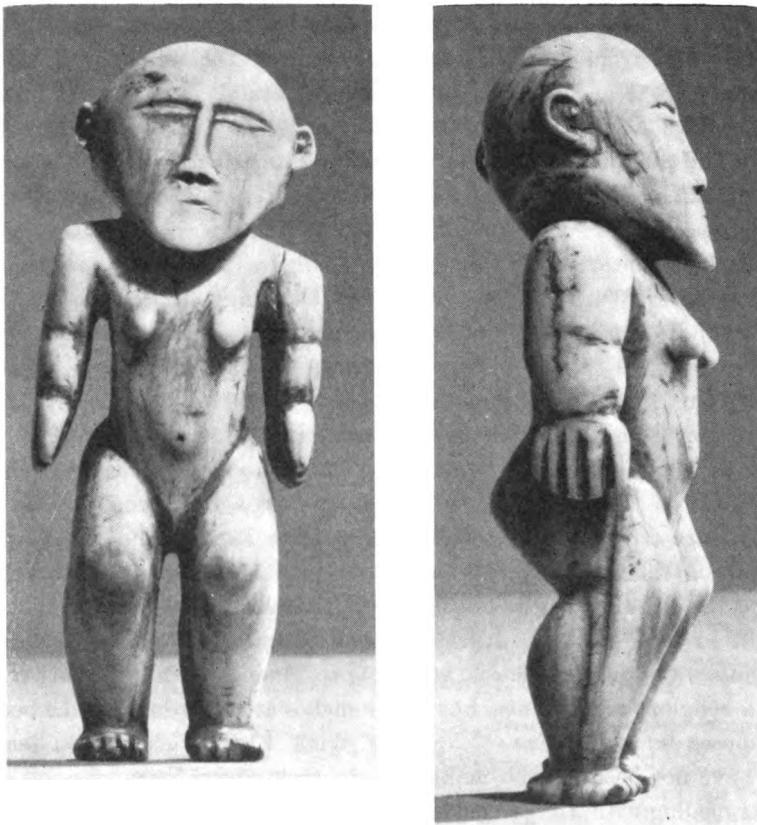


Fig. 32. Female figure from Viti Levu. H.: 13.3 cm. — MPA 57.108.

The Vienna Tongan image has on the back of the head a small suspension lug and this is met with also on a specimen (no. 1) (fig. 32) from Viti Levu and now kept in the Museum of Primitive Art, New York. A small suspension lug is also on a Cambridge figure (no. 3) but here it is situated

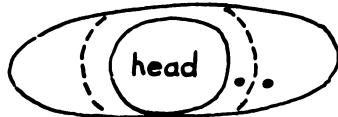
on the top of the head. The smaller of the two Philadelphia figures (no. 8) (fig. 34) has the back of the head pierced for a cord. The authenticity of this figure which is of bone probably from a whale has been questioned, but we think the hole for a cord gives us reason to register it as Fijian. If we do not take into account the taller Philadelphia figure (no. 7) (fig. 33) although it has two holes in the back of the head which may represent failures to provide a hole for suspension it can be said that the tooth figures in our list in one way or another are figures that are or can be hung, as the rest are three suspension hooks with incorporated double figures and a necklace with small images (fig. 54).

The tallest figure is 20 cm, the Philadelphia specimen of sperm-whale tooth. Judging from the surface lines at that part of the shoulder where two pieces are pinned together it looks as though this image had earlier been one piece which, after a break, had to be mended. This figure was examined by Dr. Alfred Kidder II whose observations were communicated to me in a letter: "The right shoulder and arm were glued on — there is no doubt that on that side the figure was carved as a whole. The crack across the upper chest and shoulders is the inherent weak spot. It is definitely *not* an artificial fissure, but part of the natural structure of the ivory." Dr. Kidder thinks that the figure was carved in one piece originally, *i. e.*, "the left arm and shoulder broke off and was fastened on by what must be slightly curved, soft iron pins."

There is in the center of each ear of this figure a small metal plug, apparently of iron. The navel is just a shallow drilled hole.

It is interesting to notice that the smallest single figures in our list — from the necklace (fig. 54) — are a bit taller than the Cook figure in Vienna, the smallest figure on the necklace measuring 7.4 cm. The double figures on the hooks have all about the same heights as the Vienna figure. The tall Philadelphia figure (fig. 33) is of nearly the same size as the two figures recorded from Waimarou, Viti Levu. They were according to Deane about nine inches. These figures were made of 'ivory' pieces joined together. Deane says that the Waimarou specimens have pins of lead inserted holding the different parts together. Mr. Higginson is more accurate in his description: the arms and legs were mortised in and fastened with *vesi* pegs.

In style we can distinguish between the so-called Tongan style exemplified by the figures on the suspension hooks and a style that perhaps can be regarded as Fijian, found in the small figures of the necklace and in the taller Philadelphia figure.



-- natural crack



Fig. 33. Figure of whale tooth. H.: 20 cm. — P-UM 18194.

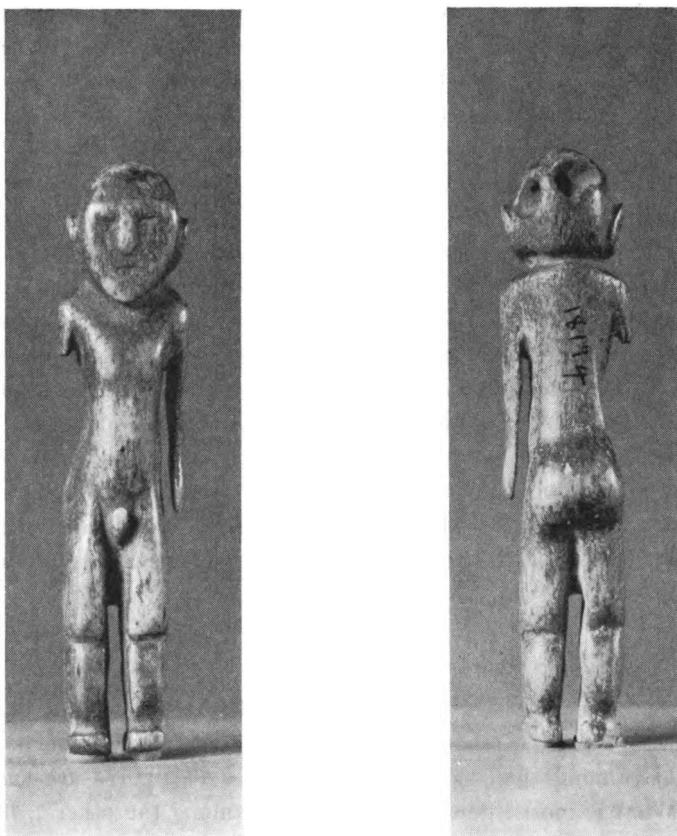


Fig. 34. Male whale bone figure. H.: 11.4 cm. — P-UM 18194.

Most figures in the "ivory" series of our list are supposed to be of sperm whale tooth. The smaller Philadelphia figure is an exception. It is probably of whale bone. The taller figure from the same museum has caused some controversy. In Linton and Wingert, "Arts of the South Seas", (p. 19) it was described as being of walrus tusk. Dr. Schuyler Cammann changed this in a paper about carvings in walrus "ivory" (published in the University Museum Bulletin, vol. 18, no. 3, 1954) where he stated that "the figure in question was obviously made from two sperm whale's teeth" (p. 29).

Dr. Frederick A. Ulmer, Jr., Curator of Mammals at the Philadelphia Zoological Garden has afterwards studied the figure and according to him

it is carved from a sperm whale tooth. "It resembles sperm whale ivory in many ways and shows no such resemblance to walrus ivory in my opinion." (Dr. Ulmer in a letter dated June 19, 1959.)

The only figure said to be of walrus tusk is the one at the Museum of Primitive Art in New York (no. 1). This was earlier labelled as being of cachalot tooth. After an examination of the figure in the Department of Mammals at the American Museum of Natural History the label has been changed and it is now recorded as a figurine of walrus "ivory." It may be worth mentioning that the United States commercial agent in Fiji, J. B. Williams, in a letter dated January 20th, 1847 and addressed to his brother at Salem asks for "Sea horse [i. e., walrus] & whales teeth" in a memorandum for the outfitting of a bark to Fiji. (The letter is in Williams' Papers in the Peabody Museum.)

I do not think it unwise to have a trained zoologist working on the whole series of "ivories" from Fiji and Tonga. As a cultural anthropologist I have restricted myself to the collection and interpretation of cultural facts, at the same time recording the opinion of the biologist where it has been available.

### *Hanging images*

We have already observed that most of the tooth figures in our list can be hung, some of them as hooks. We find figures incorporated in hooks also among the wooden images, six of 17 figures are suspension hooks. What is most interesting is that one among the others, the "Mbui ni Kauvandra" (fig. 13) has a base in the form of a block with pegs for suspension. There is at the same time no suspension lug on the head. If there is no hidden break after a lug under the head coating the only way to suspend this figure is by a string around its neck, as with the desecrated Tongan figure of which we have a drawing in Williams' "A narrative of missionary enterprises." One wonders about the purpose of the sennit cord around neck and upper part of the body, above the breasts, on the Vanua Levu female figure (fig. 6). On a label it is stated that "the cord is in the position in which women are strangled at husband's funeral."<sup>86</sup> As far as I know the strangling cord — of bark cloth — was simply placed around the neck and had the form of a loop. The remaining part of the base could have been a block similar to those on the suspension hooks if the dowel had not existed.

---

<sup>86</sup> USNM. Letter, 6.8.1956.

Andreas Scheller says in his study about hangers in Indonesia and the South Seas ("Aufhängehaken aus Indonesien und der Südsee," 1941) that suspension hooks are rare in eastern, northern and southern Polynesia. Also Samoa of western Polynesia is included in this area, but not the Friendly Islands. One of the Tongan suspension hooks is in the Sparrman collection of the Ethnographical Museum of Sweden in Stockholm.<sup>86 a</sup> Suspension hooks are also sporadic in the Melanesian islands. The area most rich in hangers is the Sepik area of New Guinea.<sup>87</sup>

Fiji, probably together with Tonga, makes an area rich in suspension hooks, an interesting fact, as the islands on both sides of this cultural border — both the Melanesian and the Polynesian islands — are poor in hangers. Without risking any conclusions about connections in culture history we must mention that the Sepik hooks with their incorporated images are a cultural parallel to the Fijian figure-hooks.

---

<sup>86 a</sup> Andreas Scheller, *Aufhängehaken aus Indonesien und der Südsee*. Ethnologica• Vol. 5. Leipzig, 1941. Pp. 107 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Ib. Pp. 119 ff. & 132 ff.

## CARVINGS IN LOW RELIEF

Tongan clubs with human figures in relief work are sometimes found in old collections of South Sea specimens. We know nearly nothing about the cultural background of these anthropomorphs which are often arranged in small scenes. In the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge there are some clubs in the Fijian collection with relief work of this kind. One is a paddle-club (1932.680) which the museum got in 1932. There is a letter about this club from its donor, Mr. P. L. Waterhouse, who says that the club "has been in the possession of my father & myself later since the early cannibal days of Fiji." It was sent from Fiji "by my uncle who was one of the first missionaries in the islands in 1840's to my father in Tasmania."<sup>87a</sup> It is difficult to know exactly who the missionary was, as there were three missionaries with the name of Waterhouse in the early days of the mission: John Waterhouse and two of his sons, Joseph and Samuel Waterhouse. John Waterhouse was superintendent of the Wesleyan missions in the South Seas and he visited Fiji in 1840 and 1841. He died in 1842. Joseph Waterhouse arrived in Fiji 1850 and Samuel Waterhouse 1853.<sup>88</sup> We think the club was sent from Fiji by one of the sons, as this would fit the circumstances better, the donor speaking about his uncle. If so the club was collected in the 1850's.

The small images carved on this club have another style than the relief figures on the Tongan clubs. The figures are tall and narrow reminding one of the Rewa plank image (no. 4) (fig. 9). The other Fijian clubs with relief carvings in the Cambridge museum all have figures more Tongan in style. One of them is a pine-apple club, Z 3097, and was collected by A. P. Maudsley, who was one of the men connected with Sir Arthur Gordon in the 1870's. The figure in our rubbing from this club is of the image style such as we have in the Ha'apai wooden image of the Oldman Collection characterized by triangular forms. Two other clubs — a lotus club, Z 2983,

<sup>87a</sup> Letter to C-UMAE, 14.8.1932.

<sup>88</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. I. P. 16. MMS, letter from Joseph Waterhouse, 21.7.1851. MMS, letter from Samuel Waterhouse, 23.8.1853.

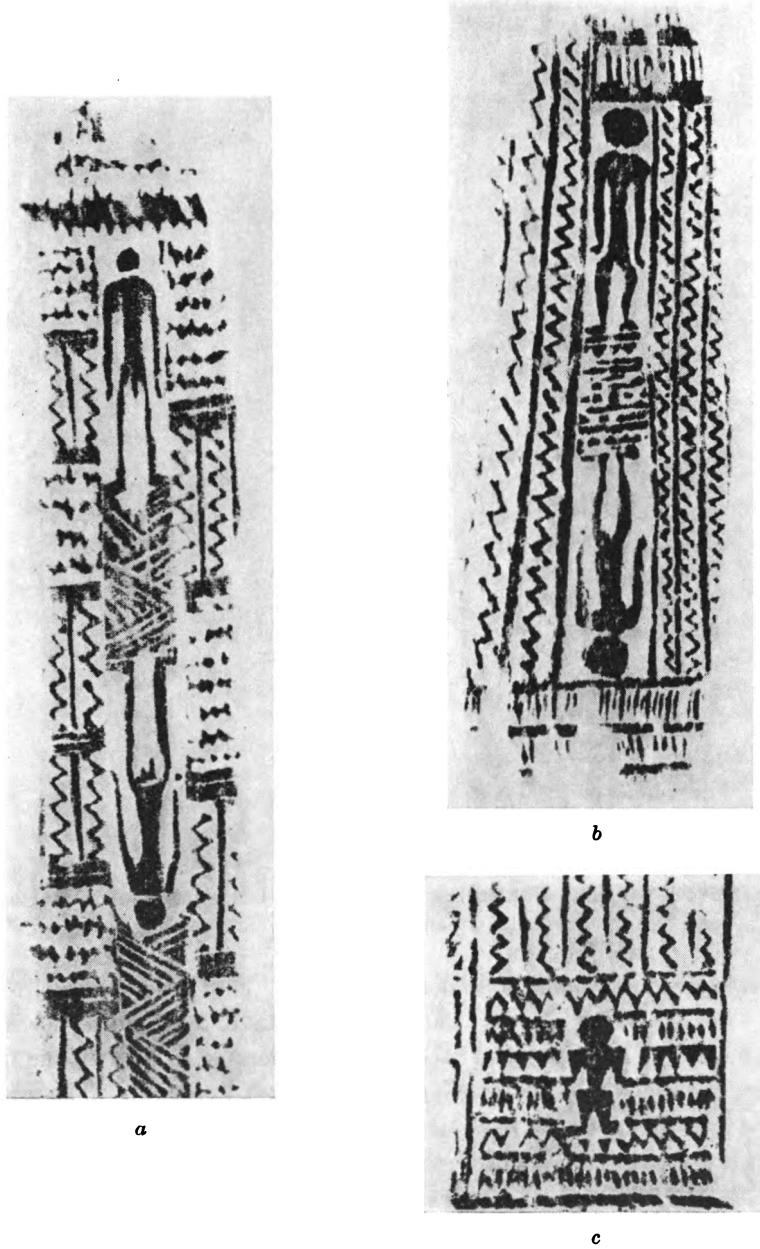


Fig. 35. Anthropomorphs in the reliefs of two clubs collected in Fiji. — C-UMAE  
1932.680 (a & b) and Z 3097 (c).

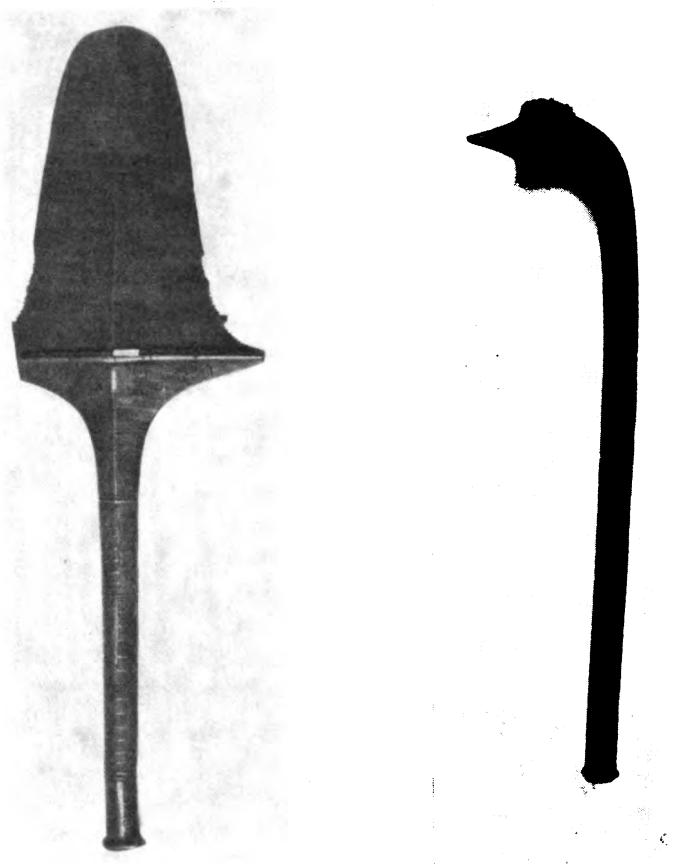


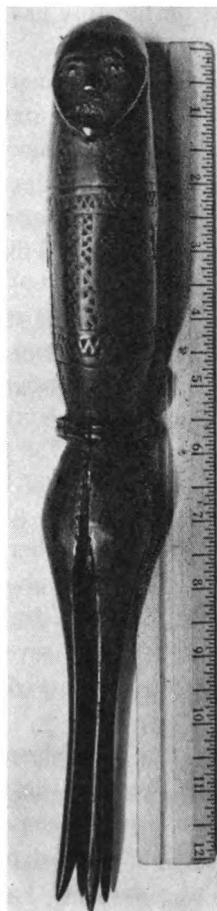
Fig. 36. The two clubs with anthropomorphs. — C-UMAE 1932.680 (to the left) and Z 3097.

also collected by Maudsley, and the "pedigree" club — a straight, round club — Z 3281 — given by Thakombau in 1876 to Maudsley — have both figures in Tongan style. According to information kept in the Cambridge museum the "pedigree" club was handed down to Thakombau by his father, Tanoa.<sup>88a</sup>

#### *A cannibal fork*

Among the relief works is also a cannibal fork recently acquired by the Fiji Museum in Suva (reg. no. 58.122) (fig. 37 a). This fork is from the

<sup>88a</sup> C-UMAE Z 3281.

*a**a**b*

**Fig. 37.** *a.* Fijian cannibal fork. H.: 33 cm. — Fiji Museum 58.122. *b.* Comb; from a photo published in 1882.

Georgius Wright collection and the Director of the Museum, Mr. R. A. Derrick, kindly told me about its existence and sent two photos of it. The fork was probably collected during the 1870's but no place of origin, except "Fiji," is recorded. Georgius Wright took part in the Mba campaign of 1873 and he was later on in the Armed Native Constabulary. According to Mr. Roth's information he knew the hill tribes of Viti Levu well and spoke their dialects but he was particularly concerned with the western

side of the island. Mr. Roth comments on the fork as presumably having belonged to a chief.

The height of it is nearly 33 cm and the handle is decorated with engravings in a Fijian zigzag pattern. On top of the handle are two carved faces — on each side — and farther down two shallow reliefs showing human faces. The face form is characterized by pointed chin, engraved lines above the eye-brows and by raised eye-balls, at least on the carving of the top. As on the two Vanua Levu figures collected on the Wilkes' expedition (fig. 6) the teeth are marked.

Another fork with human faces in relief work but not in the same style as the Suva specimen is in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Farnham in Dorset. The fork is said to be from Fiji. We saw it too late to include a detailed description of it.

\*

Another example of a carved human figure not mentioned earlier in our account was found by Mr. Roth in a photo. In the frontispiece photograph of Gerard Ansdel's "A trip to the highlands of Viti Levu . . . during the dry season of 1881" (London, 1882) there is a comb among several Fijian objects. This is probably Fijian and the handle of it is carved in the form of a human figure (fig. 37 b).

Mr. Roth also supplied me with photos of both sides of a Fijian breast-plate (fig. 44) which has a human figure fastened to the pearl-shell in the centre. The photos were taken about 1957. The breast-plate belongs to Ratu Epeli Roseru who is a local chief of Matailombau in Naitasiri province, Viti Levu. Mr. Roth saw the chief wearing it at a dance at Vunindawa on the Wainimala: "He had acquired it from his own family who had owned it for three generations but where it came from I don't think he knew."

## THE STYLES OF THE FIJIAN IMAGES

The relief carvings on the clubs give us a useful classification into the art styles that may also be helpful when discussing the ronde bosse figures and the images in high relief. There is a tendency to tallness and slimness in some of the Fijian images: the Rewa figure (fig. 9), already mentioned, the image in Christchurch (fig. 10) and the small Philadelphia "bone" figure (fig. 34) are all good examples. If the figure in the Rousseau collection (fig. 38) is genuine it also shows the same trend. Mother-of-pearl eyes as on the Rousseau image are also seen on Maori and Hawaiian figures, but as mentioned earlier in this study Julius L. Brenchley stated that two images seen by him in Levuka had eyes of the same material. The background of a beach-combers' community, however, is in this case a caveat.

If one is looking for good type-specimens of images from Fiji the Rewa plank figure could be one. Another could be the Vunimbau suspension hook of wood (fig. 14). The face profile shows a characteristic of some of the Fijian images: the jutting out of the forehead and the rest of the face in relief on a deeper surface. The priests' wooden oil-dishes<sup>89</sup>) in human form may be placed here. The wooden images on these dishes (see fig. 39) furnish a good example of Fijian specimens with a more fixed style. There is in general, however, no high degree of uniformity in the Fijian figures.

A third Fijian type-specimen would be the Matai Lombau wooden head (fig. 18). We have already analysed this rounder type of head and the relations between eye and nose forms. We have placed the head of the Christchurch figure (fig. 10) in the same group.

Another characteristic face form is found on some of the Fijian "ivory"

<sup>89</sup> These dishes are for cosmetic use. They appear also in other forms and the following is said in the Godeffroy catalogue: "Benutzt werden diese Platten um das zum Einreiben der Haut gebrauchte Cocosöl darauf zu gieessen." Schmeltz and Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abtheilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg*. P. 178. It is not unimportant to know that one of these dishes, in human form, is from Tholo, Viti Levu. (Oldman Coll. no. 584.) About another dish of this kind (procured by Capt. Worth) Erskine was told that it "had composed part of the furniture of an old heathen temple." (J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a cruise among the islands of the western Pacific*. London, 1853. P. 230.)

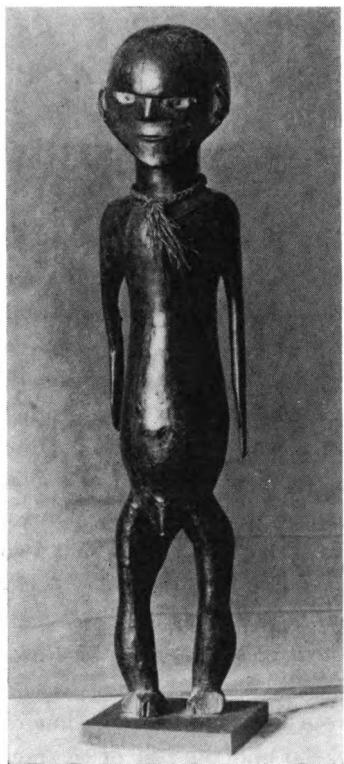


Fig. 38. Male figure. Collection  
M. Rousseau. H.: 66 cm.

figures. The taller Philadelphia item (fig. 33) might be taken as an illustration, but the figures on the necklace in Cambridge (fig. 54) could also be examples. The mouth is a small score, not too regular, and the eye cavity has a marked contour only in relation to nose and forehead. Without using any special item as an illustration we can add as a fifth group Fijian figures with some form of sculptured head representing hairdressing or a head-dress. But this can perhaps be related to a "naturalistic" tendency in Fijian wooden sculpture exemplified also by marks on female figures representing tattoos or hair and a resinous coating on one of these, hinting at artificial hair on the figure, as on some Hawaiian images.

Our enumeration of some styles does not mean that we have some exclusive types of figures. In most cases it is simply a question of different characteristic aspects that may be found in combination in a Fijian image.

These aspects are abstractions and more characteristics could be found. I have, for instance, not mentioned the rendering of the hands with spread and pointed fingers as in the priests' dishes in human form.

#### *Fijian figures in Tongan style*

We find it somehow meaningless to discuss and argue *in detail* about what is Tongan and Fijian in the Tonga-Fiji area. We need within the Fiji Group more research on actual cultural frontiers of the 19th century and a tackling of this problem satisfactorily does not mean "endgültig." But as we think it may be possible to get knowledge about cultural frontiers within Fiji to some extent we think it reasonable also to get some dividing lines between what was Fijian and Tongan in the 19th century.



Fig. 39. Dish for cosmetic use. H.: 35 cm. — MMS.

There are in the Tonga-Fiji area several female "ivory" images with a distinct style whose characteristics are "full breasts, curved abdomen, and enlarged buttocks."<sup>89a</sup> Figures of this style have, if the native informants are trustworthy, been in Fiji for some generations. Some of them have reached a definite cultural standing there. At the same time a Cook specimen of the style is known and we can assume that this was acquired in Tonga.

The problem — perhaps more methodological than real — was to get more documentary evidence as whether the figures were Tongan. The Ha'apai wooden figure in the Oldman Collection (fig. 26) was among the best documented. We had the accounts of John Thomas and John Williams and the anthropomorphs of the Tongan clubs had the same treating of parts of the body. This image with angular forms could be related

---

<sup>89a</sup> T. T. Barrow, *Human figures in wood and ivory from western Polynesia*. Man. Vol. 56 (1956). P. 165.

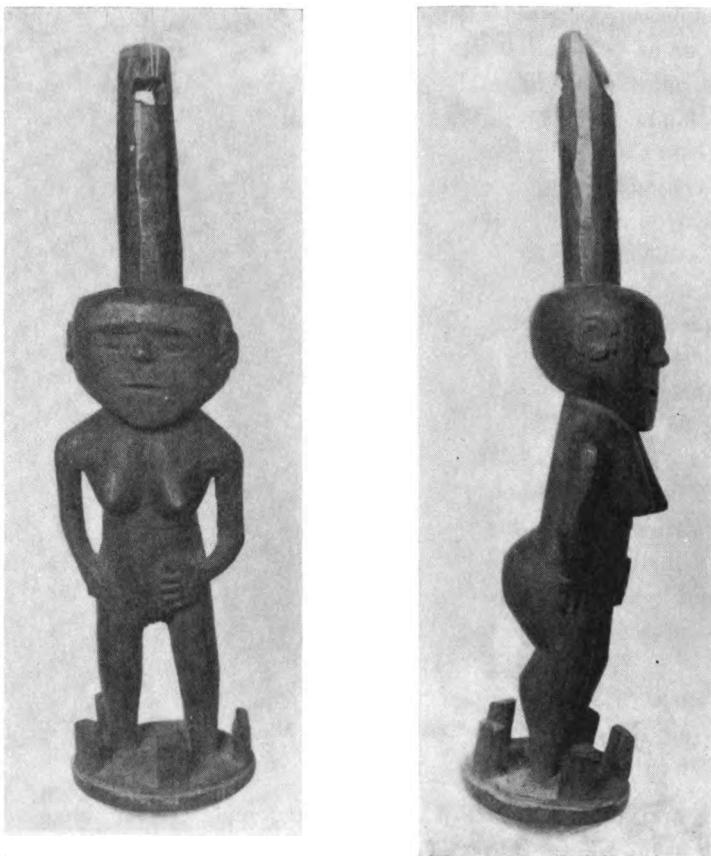


Fig. 40. Wooden suspension hook with female image. H.: 66 cm. — L-MfV Me 10849.

typologically to images with more circular forms. Broad shoulders appeared in both types, likewise full breasts. In our search for documentation among the wooden images we finally came across a figure in Marischal College (fig. 28). This "goddess," with a curious non-Tongan name bestowed upon her, gave us, if the statement of the place of origin is reliable, a documented figure with more circular forms like those on some sperm-whale images collected in Fiji but said to be Tongan.

Thinking of the figures in both Fijian and Tongan style there is a characteristic trait that we have not mentioned before: the triangular face-form, with a pointed chin, in a lot of figures. This face form is in some cases balanced by a more round form of the face, in the "ivory" figures with a

tendency to squareness. The Tonga-Fiji figures are an interesting field of study from the artistic point of view of the relations — and sometimes mixing — of two art forms: one more angular with flat surfaces and the other more round curvilinear.

#### *The position of the arms*

Peter Buck has characterized the Tongan — and western Polynesian — figures as having the arms hanging straight down free from the body.<sup>90</sup> The same position of the arms is found in Fiji, with the limitation that the straight hanging arms are sometimes not free but attached to the body as in the Copenhagen tree fern figures (fig. 22). Some figures have the arms attached to the body only at the loins (the figure of the Wilkes' suspension hook (fig. 21) and the tree fern figure in Oxford (fig. 24)).

More deviating are the three images from Vanua Levu, collected by Wilkes: the Mbua Bay figure (fig. 4) has one hand put over the groin and another behind the buttock. The two other figures (fig. 6) have their hands — with spread fingers — placed on the chest and abdomen. A characteristic alternation is that the female figure has the right hand placed higher than the left one, the male figure vice versa. The Leipzig hook image (fig. 40) can also be placed in this group of figures.

---

<sup>90</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa, *Material representations of Tongan and Samoan gods*. The Journal of the Polynesian Society. Vol. 44 (1935). P. 162.

### THE "IDOL" PROBLEM

Williams did not regard the images of Fiji as idols and we think his investigation in the 1840's is the most thorough-going we have on this question. It is a pity that he gave more details of the results of his research than of the different stages of the investigation. His journal and notes have, however, given some of the facts underlying his conclusion. One of his remarks is that the figures were found in certain areas only. When he speaks about the figures as terrifying the children he says that they were found on the larger islands, which would mean both Vanua Levu and Viti Levu. In Vanua Levu we know that they were not "uncommon" at Mbua. In the area where they were found by Williams we have also to include Taveuni. Wilkes' three figures from Vanua Levu — one of them from Mbua — corroborate Williams' findings as far as Vanua Levu is concerned. One limitation must be pointed out in both Williams' interpretation of the images as being no idols, and in his record of their distribution: Williams worked mostly in the Koro Sea area and he did not know much about the interior of, for example, Viti Levu.

Kleinschmidt's record about the double figures — and the two with provenience Nandi and Namosi need not belong to the properly interior parts of Viti Levu — is not detailed enough to allow any valid conclusions in spite of his speaking about "Götzenbilder." It looks as if he had got most of his information from the owners of the two figures. We have to thank him for keeping Sir Arthur Gordon's note about the "Nandi devil." This is most important. It shows that the whale tooth hook with its two images was placed in a small *mbure*, probably of sinnet, and was what in Fijian museum collections has been called "temple model." We also know that the hanger was regarded as a *vakandinandina* of a priest. *I vakandinandina* may be translated as "evidence, proof." The term is also used for "the present or presents given by a man with his proposal to marry, to a woman. If she accepts it it is called *i vakandinandina*."<sup>90a</sup> The description

---

<sup>90a</sup> A. Capell, *A new Fijian dictionary*. Sydney, 1941. P. 60.

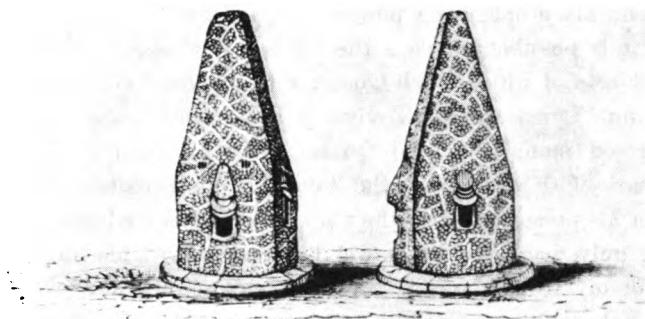


Fig. 41. Fijian oracle. — Wilkes' "Narrative of the US exploring expedition," III, p. 94.

of the Nandi "devil" in Sir Arthur's note places it in the spheres of a priest's activities. The priest was in Fiji the mouth of the god, sometimes the god. Here the *tevoro* (devil) or *kalou* had a symbol in the double figures of the hook.

Wilkes relates a case at Levuka on Ovalau where the small *mbure* itself had human form. "The priest . . . pretends to receive oracles from a miniature *mbure*, which he keeps behind a screen in the spirit-house. This engine of superstition . . . is about four feet high; the base is about fifteen inches square; it is hollow within, has an ear on one side of it, and a mouth and nose on the other. This oracle is covered with scarlet and white seeds, . . . , which are stuck upon it in fantastic figures with gum." The priest "whispers in the ear of the model, and pretends to receive an answer by applying his own ear to its mouth."<sup>91</sup>

The version of Lilavatu in the "Stanmore Papers" says that the figure was "entered by the goddess." And a *mbure* was built for it. We think objects of an extraordinary kind or objects placed in an extraordinary situation — as the healing of the chief — could be regarded as *wangga-wangga*, a "vehicle of manifestation" of a *kalou*.<sup>91a</sup>

Deane has supplied us with another example of Fijian "idolatry": the two "ivory" figures of the Waimarou tribe in Tholo, Viti Levu. The two figures called chief and chieftainess of the tribe were believed to "hold in themselves the welfare of the clan, and especially of the high-born line."

<sup>91</sup> Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. Pp. 94 f.

<sup>91a</sup> A. Capell and R. H. Lester, *Local divisions and movements in Fiji*. Oceania. Vol. 12 (1941). Pp. 29 ff.

They are in some way related to fertility. A boy looking upon the female image forfeits his propagating power.

Perhaps it is possible to place the "images" in a very broad category of sacred objects of which Buell Quain, with modern field experience from western Vanua Levu, speaks. Toviya, a Fijian with some reputation for being a sacred man, presented Quain "with an ancient throwing-club bound in bark-cloth wrappings, the 'house' of his ancestor. A sacred axe remained in his possession, but the club shared in sacredness, and parting with it not only decreased his power but endangered his life; if I should be remiss in my respect for it, . . . , the angered ancestor would surely return to Nakoroka to wreak vengeance upon him who had carelessly shared sacred favors with a foreigner."<sup>92</sup>

Mr. G. K. Roth has sent me the following lines which he has found in Thos. Williams' annotated copy of "Fiji and the Fijians" (opposite p. 216) kept in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. They are interesting as they also give some idea of what Williams meant when he spoke of idolatry: "The present generation asserts that their forefathers did not 'make to themselves graven images' 'to bow down before them, and worship them,' their sacred objects were symbols of their divinities but to *them* they never bowed in prayer, they never called on *them* to deliver. . . ."<sup>92a</sup>

Very few of the images kept in museums and collections give information about their Fijian environment. Among the 34 items listed there is some form of information only for a few. The Nandi suspension hook has already been mentioned. This had in heathen time been kept in a miniature *mbure*. In Christian time it had been hidden by the priest. The Rewa plank figure was obtained from the chief of the "spirit-place." A comparison with Williams' drawing of a temple at Somosomo allows us to regard

<sup>92</sup> Buell Quain, *Fijian village*, Chicago, 1948. P. 236.

<sup>92a</sup> When Williams in his work "Fiji and the Fijians" said that the natives of the Fiji Group did not know of any idolatry in the strict meaning of the word he added a sentence which we have not quoted earlier. It runs as follows: "It is extremely doubtful whether the reverence with which some things, such as certain clubs and stones, have been regarded, had in it anything of religious homage." The lines in Williams' annotated copy have here a correlate. It is difficult to know what Williams had in mind when he wrote his note but our own interpretation is that he meant that the sacred objects should be regarded only as symbols and that the reverence for these symbols did not actually imply religious homage. The stones and clubs which Williams mentions were treated only with respect. It could be supposed that Williams when he made his investigation of the human images only thought of the figures as not being given "religious homage" and overlooked the fact that they were treated with respect. As Williams mentions the respect paid to some sacred stones and clubs it would, however, be unfair to him as an observer if we did not rely on his statement in another case where respect could have been found. He would have mentioned this form of reverence too if it had existed.

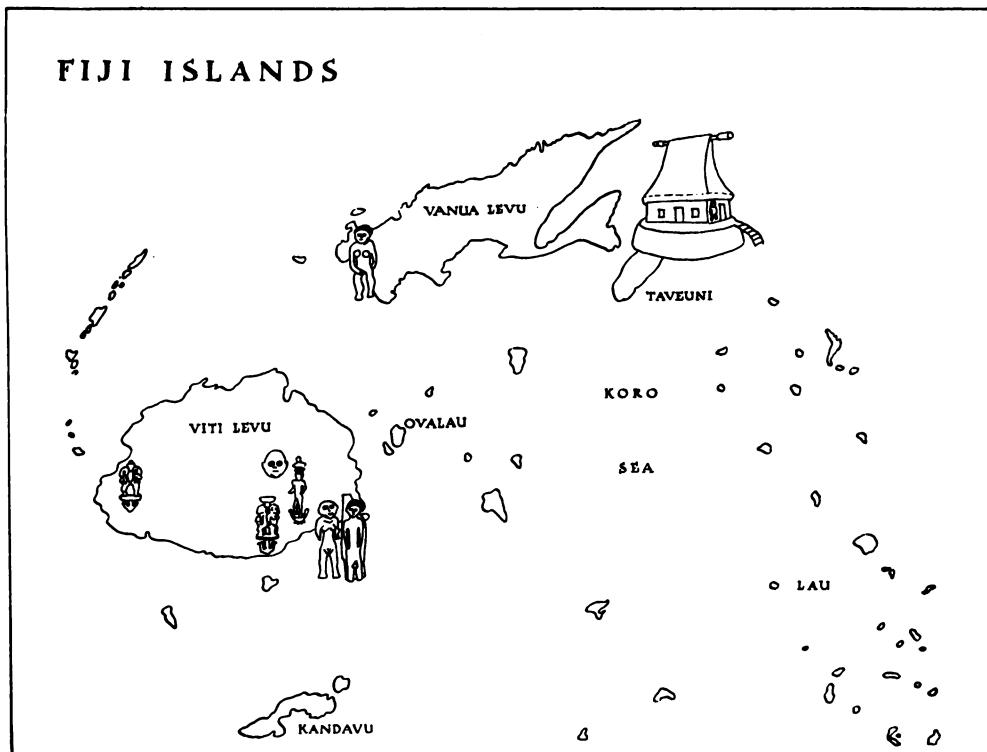


Fig. 42. Map of the Fiji Group showing localised images.

it as part of a Rewan *mbure*. The small Edinburgh figure is registered as an "idol of carved wood, taken from a heathen temple." (The Royal Scottish Museum got it together with some other Fijian objects, among them a miniature temple of sinnet.)<sup>93</sup> This information would have been more reliable if the place of origin within Fiji and the time of the collection had been given. The T-shaped prop on the back of the figure is most curious and we have no clue as to its use. The Mbua Bay figure gives us another background: some kind of a cannibal place, if the original label of the specimen can be trusted. In the old letters and journals of the missionaries a *mbure* was a focusing point when the *mbakola*, the slain, were brought home as offerings to the god and eaten. The consecrated spot where the figure was found can therefore be regarded as corresponding

<sup>93</sup> RSM 1868.79.5.

to the setting of a *mbure*. However, we need more information about places like this one found in western Vanua Levu. The Christchurch figure from the 1870's, finally, has been registered as a wooden idol from a native temple.

### *Mbure kalou*

The most conspicuous object in the Fijian *mbure kalou* was perhaps what Williams has described as "a long piece of white *masi* (bark cloth) fixed to the top, and carried down the angle of the roof so as to hang before the corner-post and lie on the floor." This formed "the path down which the god passes to enter the priest, and marks the holy place which few but he dare approach."<sup>94</sup> The ritual importance of this *masi* piece hanging down from the roof of the *mbure kalou* is emphasized in an event of 1854, the year the Mbauans were converted to Christianity. After their conversion they subjugated some rebellious villages "at Goro" and the heathen temples were stripped of the native cloth suspended from the roof, "behind which their gods are said to descend."<sup>95</sup>

Wilkes says that "the *mbure* is furnished much after the manner of their dwellings, except that a portion of it is screened off for the spirit and the priest."<sup>96</sup> Colvocoresses who was a member of the Wilkes' expedition describes the interior of the *mbure kalou* of Levuka in the following way: "At one side there is a fire-place, over which is suspended a platform made of reeds. There were also some spears and clubs standing up in one of the corners; but no images, nor anything that gave the slightest indication of its being a place of worship were to be seen."<sup>97</sup> Mary Wallis visited Mbau in 1846 and saw together with some of the missionaries the great "buri" of the town. It "contained nothing save one solitary roll of cinnet, and a small quantity of native cloth. One breadth of white '*masi*' was suspended from the ridge-pole of the temple to the floor. The spirit remains between that and the thatching of the house, and when the priest wishes to consult it, he seats himself in front of the '*masi*', where he commences a regular set of convulsions, which he declares is occasioned by the spirit entering into his worthy self. The spirit is consulted chiefly about their wars and in cases of sickness."<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Pp. 222 f.

<sup>95</sup> MMS. James Calvert's journal, 30.11.1854.

<sup>96</sup> Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. P. 371.

<sup>97</sup> Geo. M. Colvocoresses, *Four years in a government exploring expedition*. New York, 1852. P. 136.

<sup>98</sup> *Life in Feejee*. P. 173.

The temples were allowed to decay and were then rebuilt when they were needed, for example, before a war. New *mbures* could also be erected. Williams visited Lekutu, western Vanua Levu in 1852 and "paused at the village of Tibiavaga where I advised the heathen to desist from building a *bure* for a sick chief, and to send at once to Bua for medicine."<sup>99</sup> In his journal of 1844 Lyth relates that a chief had "a small buri built to his god, for the recovery of his knee."<sup>100</sup> Most cases where *mbures* are erected or rebuilt — in the records of the missionaries — are, however, in relation to warfare, being part of the ceremonies before going to war. The *mbure* was also the terminus of these expeditions, when *mbakola* was brought home — to the *kalou*. Anyone reading the old missionary journals or letters from Fiji or the early accounts of the literature is struck by the scantiness in ritual equipment of the Fijian *mbure*.

### *Shamanism*

The most important institution of Fijian religious life — at least in its social implications — was shamanism, something Fiji shared with Tonga and Polynesia. The shamans or priests were regarded as being able to be possessed by the god or inspired by him. Lyth witnessed for the first time "a Priest under his supposed inspiration" at Somosomo in August 1841. The priest "vociferated and shook for some time. He spoke in an angry tone repeating over and over again who is a God besides me, you go and fight if I tell you to go and fight Bau. You go and conquer. He also asked, 'who is Jehovah? he is no God, I only am a God.'"<sup>101</sup>

Wilkes records that John Hunt — another Wesleyan missionary — whom he met at Somosomo in 1840 had said that the natives seldom separated the idea of the god from that of his priest, who was "viewed with almost divine reverence."<sup>102</sup>

Joseph Waterhouse says in his journal of August 1851 that the Nandrongs "worship their priests as incarnated gods. When one dies, the people say, '..., our god is dead.'"<sup>103</sup> And Lockerby records a priest on Vanua Levu (1808) who was called "Callow."<sup>104</sup> When Hunt witnessed some "temple" ceremonies at Somosomo in 1840 and saw the

<sup>99</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. II. P. 571.

<sup>100</sup> MMS. Extract of Lyth's journal: 24.6.1844, Vuna on Taveuni. Fiji letters 1844.

<sup>101</sup> MMS. Letter, 7.8.1841.

<sup>102</sup> Wilkes, *A narrative of the United States exploring expedition*. Vol. III. P. 91.

<sup>103</sup> MMS. Extract of journal, 26.8.1851. Fiji letters 1852.

<sup>104</sup> *The journal of William Lockerby*. P. 33.

high priest and the old "king" in action he got the impression that the priest was regarded by the Somosomoans as "idols were to some of the ancient heathens."<sup>105</sup>

Fijian shamanism in a situation of culture contact is illustrated by a passage in Joseph Waterhouse's diary of July 1851 when he as the first missionary visited Koro. In a village on the island they were "deifying a young woman. The priestess, who is her mother, asserts that the gods compassionate the Feejeeans, now that white men are endeavouring to overthrow and banish the gods of the land, and that one of them has become incarnated, in consequence, that Feejeeans may hear his voice, believe, and tremble. Light is excluded from this temple, and they who visit the oracle must do so in all mystery of darkness." A Christian informant told Waterhouse that "the incarnated Deity" was a woman, the daughter of the priestess.<sup>106</sup>

#### *Different manifestations of kalou*

After our diversion to the *mbure kalou* and shamanism — in order to get a glimpse of Fijian ritual life — we will take up examples of different manifestations of the *kalou*, in western Viti Levu called *nitu*. Shamanism has given us one — the possessed or inspired priest. To discuss whether he or she was distinguished from the *kalou* in Fijian thought would be to apply western philosophy to the thinking of the Fijians of the 19th century. It is enough to record the fact that the message of the possessed priest was regarded as the message of the *kalou*.

Hunt was on Vatulele in 1843 and visited also "the residence of the goddess of Vatulele." "A number of crustaceous fish, larger than a shrimp and of the same colour as a shrimp when boiled" were revered. "The mother of the fish is said to be of immense size and to reside in a large cave by herself, and her children leave her when they are called by their name, which in Feejeean is Ura." In spite of the chief's calling out, "Ura, Ura, come that the chief from England may see you," only a few of the red prawns were seen and they had been there when Hunt arrived.<sup>107</sup>

In 1851 Joseph Waterhouse was in Rakiraki, northeastern Viti Levu and "whilst on our March" — he says — "I noticed a stone set up by the way side, about eighteen inches in circumference, and two feet in height, dressed with a liku, (the scanty covering used by Feejeean women) and upon

<sup>105</sup> MMS. John Hunt's journal, 7.9.1840.

<sup>106</sup> MMS. Extract of journal, 14.7.1851. Fiji letters 1851.

<sup>107</sup> MMS. Extract of journal, 18.4.1843. Fiji letters 1843.

enquiry, was informed that it was a female GOD! An unsculptured stone — a goddess! . . . No persuasion could induce one of the natives to touch it.”<sup>108</sup>

Waterhouse records also another case of a *kalou* manifestation: A club, for Mbetaninggori, the son of Ratumaimbulu. This club was “one of the shrines of this god” and Waterhouse had got it. “It was wrapped carefully in fine head-dresses, and deposited in the temple built in its honour. In order to show respect, whoever entered the temple moved circuitously so as to avoid the place where the shrine lay, and bowed low. . . . When the front of the temple was being weeded, and whilst the club was receiving its annual bath, the most perfect silence was maintained, after which the sacred shells (the conch shells) were blown, and the new month was formally announced.”<sup>109</sup> It is possible that this club is “the god of rain and fair weather” brought to Waterhouse when Mbau abandoned heathenism.

A. J. Webb gives another example of how a *kalou* could be housed: two shell trumpets suspended at the entrance of the *mbure kalou* at Naro-korokoyawa at the Wainimala River in Viti Levu. The chief told Webb that one of them was a god and the other a goddess. They sometimes quarrelled and they had behaved “anxiously” an evening before an important happening for the tribe. They had been climbing along the ridge-pole of the *mbure*. Both were war gods and the shells were blown when the warriors were attacking.<sup>110</sup>

Lockerby says that the Fijians “have a temporarily Callow for almost everything,”<sup>111</sup> and an illustration of this is perhaps the following happening recorded by Calvert from Lau in 1842. “A priest whose god blows a large shell on his departure after having been invoked, was blowing his shell one day. When near his mouth a mouse escaped — ‘Ah’ — said the god by the mouth of the priest — ‘a god — a god.’<sup>112</sup>

The examples given are enough for our purpose: to show how different phenomena as priests, prawns,<sup>113</sup> monoliths, clubs, shell trumpets and a

<sup>108</sup> MMS. Extract of journal, 31.8.1851. Fiji letters 1851.

<sup>109</sup> Joseph Waterhouse, *The king and people of Fiji*. London, 1866. Pp. 372 f.

<sup>110</sup> A. J. Webb, *Observations on the hill tribes of Navitilevu, Fiji*. The Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science. Report 2. Melbourne, 1890. Pp. 624 f.

<sup>111</sup> *The journal of William Lockerby*. P. 34.

<sup>112</sup> MMS. James Calvert’s journal, 22.12.1842. See also Fiji letters 1842: Extract, 22.12.1842, where it is said that the priest lived on Fulanga.

<sup>113</sup> Fijian totemism and the meaning of *ithavuti* ought really to be discussed here. See A. M. Hocart, *Notes on Fijian totemism*. Anthropos. Vol. IX (1914), pp. 737 ff. P. J. de Marzan, *Le totemisme aux îles Fiji*. Anthropos II (1907), pp. 400 ff. Capell and Lester, *Local divisions and movements in Fiji*. Oceania XII (1941), pp. 21 ff.

surprising rat all can be regarded as shrines of a *kalou*. The expression *wanggawangga* for all these vehicles of manifestation is not found in the old literature but we think it better to use this term instead of English words as "house" and "shrine". The word *kalou* would also need some clarification in each case. The early missionaries differentiate between *kalou vu*, "gods originally," and *kalou yalo*, "deified spirits."<sup>114</sup> However, in our actual cases from missionaries' journals and from the literature the unqualified word *kalou* has been used, so we have had to retain it.

Our question is now: Can we regard the human figures of Fiji as *wanggawangga*?

In one case the answer is affirmative: The twin figure of the Nandi suspension hook represents the double wife of a god of Nandi. In the version of the "Stanmore Papers" it is said that the image was entered by a goddess.

The suspension hook figure of wood drawn by Williams at Somosomo could also belong to the same group if it is true that it had been regarded as the goddess of some of the Mbau king's carpenters. When the collectors simply use the term "idol" we cannot, however, talk about the images as *wanggawangga*. We need more information.

When Williams denied the existence of "idols" in Fiji it looks as if he had the same distinction in mind as we have, for he does not deny that the Fijians paid respect to some large stones and on feast days sent portions of food to some of them. The Rakiraki monolith could have been in his mind. But he denied that something similar had been done for the human images. And as he is speaking about a special distribution of these figures it is likely that he had got some sort of general knowledge on the question, of the islands and areas known by him, i. e., particularly around the Koro Sea. He did not know very much about the interior parts of Viti Levu, for example. And the Waimarou figures do come from Tholo. The coast of Nandi was known in his time and Namosi was on the fringe between the known and the unknown areas of Fiji in the 1840's.

It is appropriate to record Williams' commentary in his annotated copy of "Fiji and the Fijians" when we discuss his denial of the existence of "idols" in Fiji. He speaks there about sacred objects as symbols of divinities. What he refuses to acknowledge is that these symbols were prayed to. This, I think, does not exclude respect paid to them. Our problem will then be whether the human figures found in Fiji during, for instance,

---

<sup>114</sup> Joseph Waterhouse, *The king and people of Fiji*. P. 355.

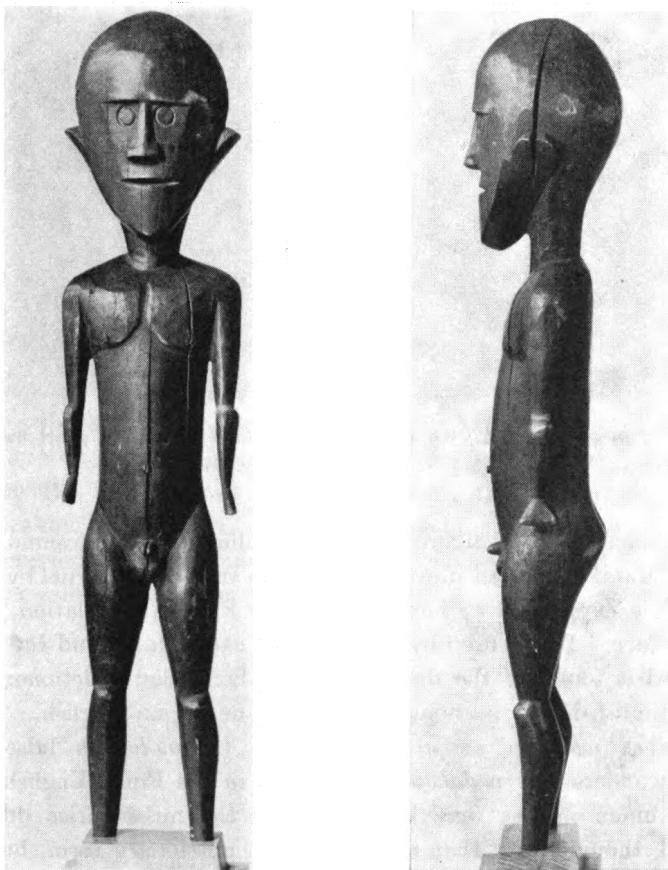


Fig. 43. Male human figure. H.: 84 cm. L-RvV 335—32. This figure and the one in the Rousseau collection (fig. 38) are both without known locality and were included in our study only on account of similarities with figures collected in Fiji.

Wilkes' expedition were looked upon as shrines, sacred symbols, of the *kalou*. It is not difficult to include the Waimaro images and the Nandi twin figure among symbols of this kind. The question is here whether we have to deal with a Tongan cultural legacy in Fiji. The style of the twin figures on the whale-tooth suspension hooks is found again in Tongan images some of which are documented. The difficulty arises when we consider the wooden figures of Williams' own time, as our records of these images are poor. The only thing is that we can say that, e. g., the Rewa plank figure is from the sacred surrounding of a "spirit-place."

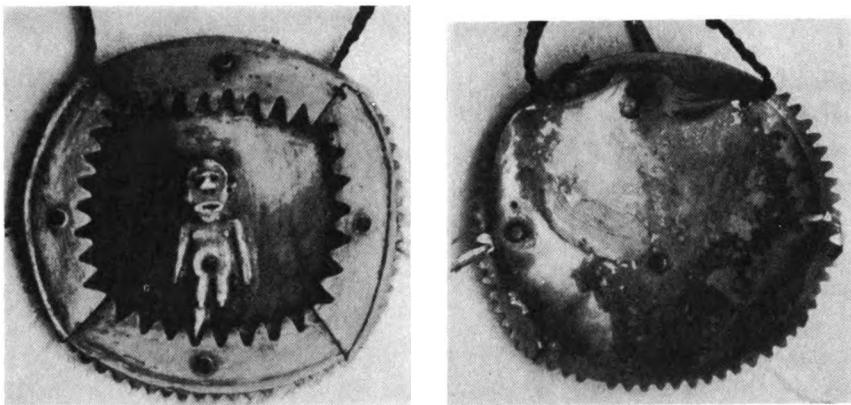


Fig. 44. Fijian breast-plate with a human figure fastened to the pearl-shell. Front and back side. About 17 cm wide.

The suspension hook figure drawn by Williams at Somosomo had the caption "Matakau" when it was published in Williams' Journal by Henderson.<sup>115</sup> This expression we have found in its English translation, given as "wooden-face." It was used by Britton.<sup>116</sup> *Mata* is "face" and *kau* "wood." This word is found in the first edition of Hazlewood's dictionary (1850) in the English-Fijian section, but not in the Fijian-English. "Idol" is translated as "*matakau*" and also "*kalou lasu*". (*Kalou lasu* is "false kalou.")<sup>117</sup> One wonders why *matakau* is not found in the Fijian-English section, as the human images were known among the missionaries during the 1840's. I thought first that *matakau* was a missionary term, but as the word could have been left out by mistake I do not wish to jump to any conclusions concerning Fijian "idolatry" based upon the omission of a word in a Fijian dictionary.<sup>118</sup>

A result of this study — in addition to the presentation of some new material for research and a tentative arranging of museum specimens — would be that we get two groups of images as answer to our question about the figures as *wanggawangga*. One group where the best documentation is from the 1840's and where most of our knowledge is from the islands and

<sup>115</sup> Henderson, *The journal of Thomas Williams*. Vol. I. Facing p. 68. — An inspection afterwards shows that Williams' own note about the Somosomo figure was headed "A Matakau, Liliakau or Dreai."

<sup>116</sup> Britton, *Loloma*. P. 128.

<sup>117</sup> David Hazlewood, *A Feejeean and English dictionary*. Vewa, 1850.

<sup>118</sup> I acknowledge gratefully the advice in this question by Mr. G. B. Milner, Lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

areas around the Koro Sea, another mainly dealing with whale tooth figures where our documentation is later and the localised specimens are from Viti Levu.

About the images of the first group we could be better enlightened. A positive fact is that images were found as ornamental parts of *mbure kalou*. However, ornaments of this kind were certainly rare in a "temple" even during the 1840's when the missionaries made their observations of heathen Fiji. We then know more about the "ivory" figures of the second group. The two accounts of a Nandi image exemplify manifestations of a *kalou*. According to the "Stanmore Papers" the image was regarded as entered by a goddess. This could be thought of as a form of spirit possession analogous to a "priest's" being possessed by a *kalou*. In the note published by Kleinschmidt, we find that the image could "speak" (hypothetically interpreted by Barrow, in his paper in *Man*, as ventriloquism). This too can be put in analogy to the inspired "priest" and his speaking as the *kalou*. May-be it is possible to relate the "idolatry," from this period in our documents, to a common idea found in what we have earlier called shamanism.

#### ADDITIONAL IMAGES

After the completion of my study some new findings worth recording were made. Reading Max von Boehn's work about puppets I found an illustration of a wooden figure from the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin.<sup>119</sup> (Fig. 45.) It was published as a Fijian ancestor figure but according to Dr. G. Koch, Keeper of the Museum's collections from Oceania, it is without known locality in the registers. The museum got the figure in 1882 and its registration number is VI 4607. The height is 95 cm. This means it is about as high as the image from Rewa, USNM 3275, fig. 9. It has no marked sexual characteristics. The head is interesting in its similarities to the wooden head from Matai Lombau, now in the Cambridge collections, C-UMAE Z 2879, fig. 18.

Another figure was found on a visit to the City Museum and Art Gallery in Birmingham. This too is similar to one of our recorded specimens, also in size. The figure in Birmingham is a female one of wood and it is 55.9 cm high. There is a similar image in Cambridge, C-UMAE Z 2869, fig. 16, the height of which is 52 cm. The Birmingham museum received its figure in 1918 from Captain Norman Chamberlain, but it was probably collected from Fiji by his father in the beginning of the 1880's. Typical for it are dark marks round the mouth and a clear pattern round the loins, both painted on. There is no doubt but that these paintings represent tattoo marks.

A further contribution to our corpus of Fijian clubs with anthropomorphs is a paddle-club in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, C-UMAE Z 3295, collected at Mbau in 1875 or 1876. A rubbing of the low relief image situated between edge and central line of the blade is given (fig. 47).

Overlooked in our study are also some club heads which look like faces when inverted. The question is, however, whether we here in all cases can speak of human faces. Of the clubs with heads of this character I am recording four. But we know of some more.

<sup>119</sup> Max von Boehn, *Puppen und Puppenspiele*. Vol. I. *Puppen*. Fig. 31. P. 28. Munich, 1929.



Fig. 45. Wooden figure. H.: 95 cm. — Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin. VI 4607.

One of them was described by H. G. Beasley in an article in *Man*, vol. 29 (1929), p. 181: "A human and lotus form of club." It was then part of the Beasley collection and it is now in the British Museum as 1941. Oc. 1.—3. (Fig. 48 a.) A club of the same type but with another rendering of the "eyes" is in the Manchester Museum (Heape coll., no. 78) (fig. 48 b).

Two other Fiji clubs with faces are found in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter (fig. 49 a & b). One of them (a) was collected about 1840 by Lieutenant George Phillpotts, R. N. The other club with a semblance of a face carved on the end (b) has a series of perforations on the under side of the head probably for tassels. The Beasley collection club and the Manchester one had similar perforations on the crest.

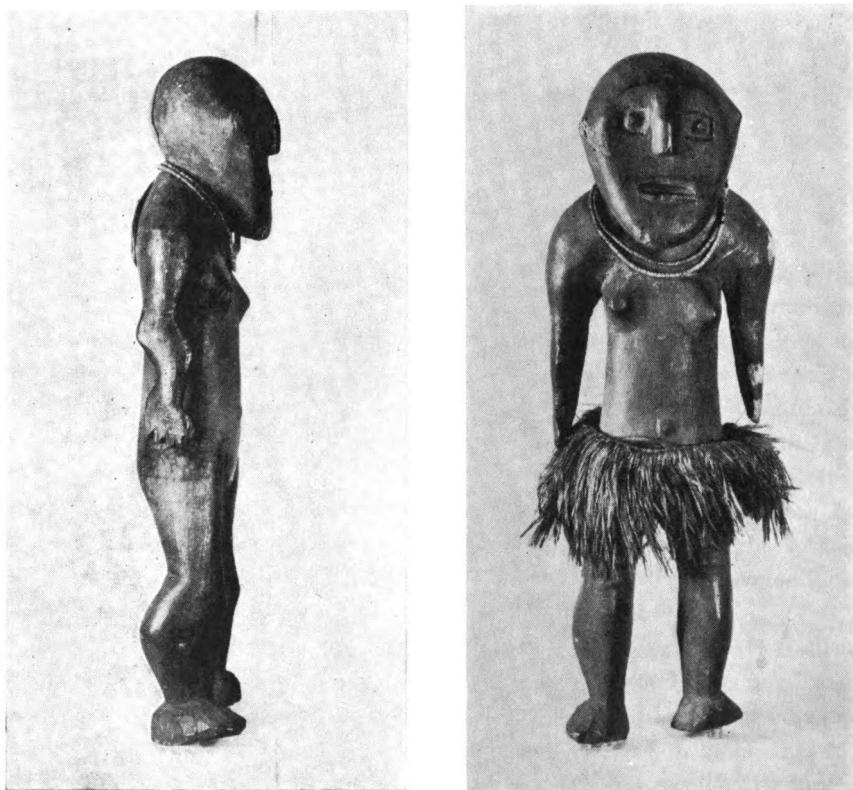
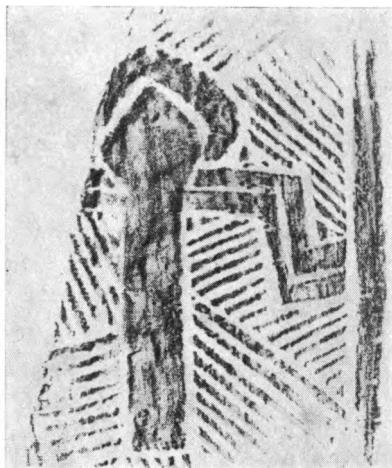


Fig. 46. Female wooden figure from Fiji. H.: 55.9 cm. — Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

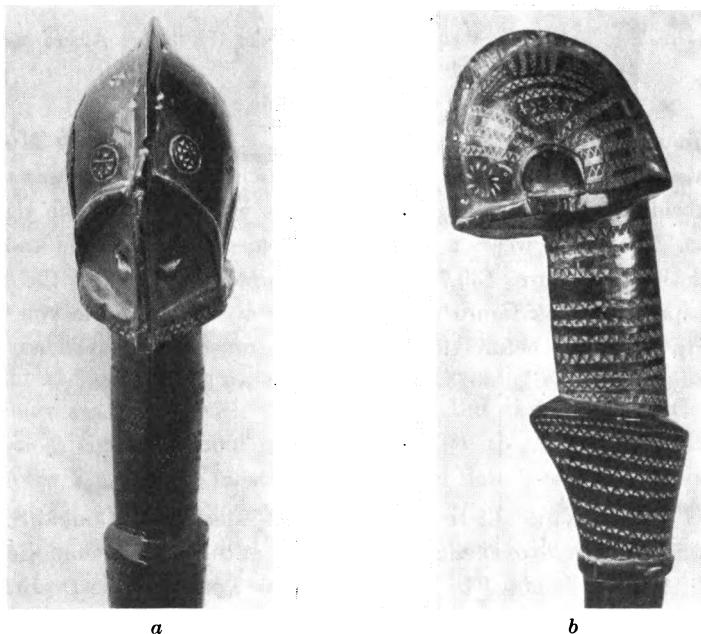
In my study I also failed to notice the human faces met with in the rock paintings on Vatulele. An account of them was given by R. W. Paine in *Man*, vol. 29 (1929), pp. 149—151: "Some rock paintings in Fiji."

\*

In the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, there is in the Anatole von Hügel papers an interesting photograph showing the Christchurch wooden image (fig. 10 in our study) and another one of wood being part of a suspension hook. In this photograph probably from the 1870's the black painted patches on the face of the taller figure are clearly seen but the *Pandanus* leaf "kilt" which the figure once was



**Fig. 47.** Anthropomorph in the relief of a Fijian paddle-club collected at Mbau.  
Height of image: 9 cm. — C-UMAE Z 3295.



**Fig. 48.** Two club heads with faces. *a*, in British Museum, 1941. Oc. 1.—3. *b*, in  
Manchester Museum, Heape 78.

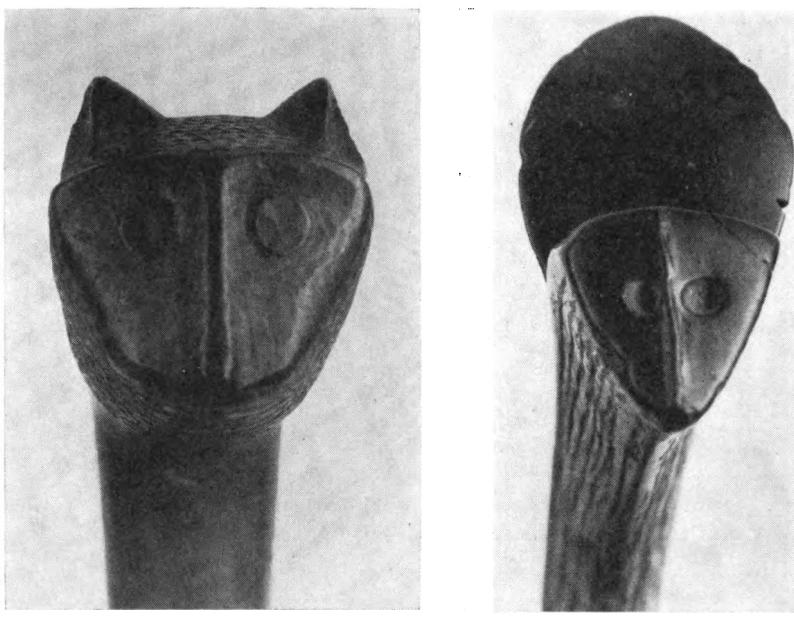


Fig. 49 a—b. Two club heads with faces, both from the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter.

dressed in according to our information from the Canterbury Museum, is here missing and we find a girdle decorated with shells. This was maybe put on accidentally as we find similar strings with shells to the right on the photo. The figure wears a necklace of whales' teeth. As we know the height of the tall figure, 139.7 cm, it is possible to work out the height of the suspension hook figure which is nearly 60 cm. Anatole von Hügel was in Fiji the years before the Christchurch museum received its image in 1877 so this photo (fig. 50) fits in with what we know already.

\*

While I was carrying out research in Salem, Mass., Dr. Donald S. Marshall told me about the existence of three dolls in the Fiji Museum, Suva, of which he had some photos to show me (fig. 51). Mr. R. A. Derrick, the curator of the Fiji Museum, on inquiry gave me the following information about them. The dolls (reg. nos. 58.16—18) were included in a collection made by Rev. R. B. Lyth (the Wesleyan missionary mentioned by us

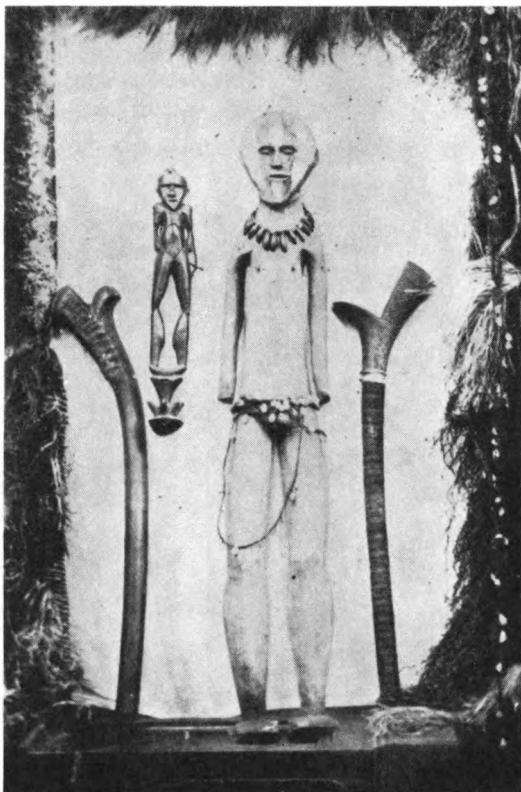


Fig. 50. Photograph from Anatole von Hügel's papers showing the tall figure now in Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, and a suspension hook figure.

when recording the "Mbui ni Kauvandra," fig. 13) who was in Tonga 1836—1839 and in Fiji 1839—1854. "While in Fiji he had a young daughter, and I suppose (but it is only a guess) that these figurines were somehow associated with that little girl. But they are in such excellent condition, that she could not have played with them much. Their dress is purely Fijian, and most accurate as to detail, so probably they were dressed by a Fijian. From the nature of their construction, such as the jointing of the limbs and the shape of the heads, they might easily be the work of an island craftsman. On the other hand, while there is some variation in expression of the faces, the rest of the work, though obviously hand work, is rather too exactly similar for the average Fijian or Tongan worker." The height of one of the three dolls of which Mr. Derrick made a scale



Fig. 51. Dolls in the Fiji Museum, Suva. Reg. nos. 58. 16—18.

drawing, is 25.7 cm. The dolls are of dark brown wood and the limbs can be articulated. The eyes are marked with white paint and black dots for pupils. A few fine hairs, probably human, are stuck to the heads. This hair is dark brownish-black similar to the hair of the Fijians. One of the three dolls is dressed as a Fijian girl, with scanty "liku" or girdle low on the hips, and a bead necklace. Continuing Mr. Derrick's description we record that another of the dolls is dressed as a Fijian chief, with wrapping of "masi" (tapa). The third is dressed in the same manner, but as a Fijian woman of rank.<sup>120</sup>

It looks as if we here have an example of culture contact. The garments are definitely Oceanic. Some illustrations in Mrs. Alice K. Early's "English dolls, effigies and puppets," (London, 1955), pp. 99 f., made me think of the articulated wooden dolls themselves as European dolls. Mr. C. M.

<sup>120</sup> Letter, 14.11.1958.

Weekley, Keeper of the Bethnal Green Museum, London, gave the following opinion: "As the heads . . . seem to be markedly non-European, whereas the body construction obviously derives from that of European wooden dolls, we can only suppose that the dolls would have been made in Fiji or Tonga under the influence of Europeans, probably missionaries.<sup>121</sup>

About the interest in dolls in mid-19th century Fiji we are informed in J. B. Williams' memorandum of 1847. "Dolls & various articles such as are purchased in Toy shops" are there asked for. The memorandum, referred to earlier in our study, was for the outfitting of a bark to Fiji and it was sent by Williams to his brother in Salem.

---

<sup>121</sup> Letter, 9.2.1959.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Among Richardson's papers in the Peabody Museum of Salem there is a document by William Lockerby which has not yet been published. The Director of the Museum, Mr. Ernest S. Dodge, kindly showed it to me when I was studying log-books of old-time Salem vessels. The title is "Directions for the Fegee Islands" and it forms a guide for sea-captains going to Fiji in order to procure sandal-wood. It may be wise to point out that Lockerby's observations — as recorded in his Journal from 1808—1809 — apply mainly to the coast-dwelling Fijians of some parts of Vanua Levu.

Concerning trade Lockerby writes in his "Directions" that the Fijians "are very fond of White shels & cloth, the two latter are to be got at the Islands to windward of My Goro<sup>122</sup> . . ." "Ivory is the most valuable article made in the form of a whale tooth and those of them that is possessed of any of them lays them up as great riches as porshun for their daughters & making peace with their offended superiors, etc." In the Fijian vocabulary given by Lockerby "tamboo" is said to be the word for "ivory."

Of direct importance for our study is the following, which can be read under "Traid for the Fegees": "If you can procure some of the New Zealand images would answer, as many as you can get."

Lockerby does not tell us about Maori images being actually brought to Fiji but some kind of interest in such things must be implied from what he says.

On four wooden images (figs. 4, 6 & 40) — three of them collected on Vanua Levu in 1840 by the Wilkes' expedition, that is to say three of our five earliest collected pieces — we find positions of arms which are exceptional in the Tonga-Fiji area where pendent straight arms are common. Flexed arms are placed with the hands on abdomen, one higher up than the other, or on abdomen and buttock. We can compare these figures with some Maori wooden images where arms and hands also are placed

---

<sup>122</sup> The island of Koro.

asymmetically on chest and abdomen.<sup>123</sup> Asymmetrical positions of arms are also found on some Easter Island wooden images.

The Wilkes' figures were found on Vanua Levu, the island of early trade in Fiji, and this would be the first background to think of for a phenomenon of culture contact. Imported Maori images could have led Fijians there to carve their own wooden figures. And such an influence might also explain why the figures were not regarded as "idols". Fostered by an idea from abroad they would not have any central position in the religious system of the Fijians.

However, in spite of Lockerby's statement on Maori images as suitable for trade in Fiji I dare not speak about a direct Maori influence found in the three figures from Wilkes' expedition. It would be rather hypothetical and speculative. I could more definitely speak of Maori influence in the case of some carvings on Fijian clubs. As is known these relief carvings have patterns similar to Maori ones. R. H. Walcott wrote a paper about this as early as 1912, "Note on Fijian clubs ornamented with Maori patterns." He describes two Fijian clubs, one of them collected about 1880 or perhaps somewhat earlier. The Maori patterns on them are 1) "a series of transverse parallel bands each of four lines, alternating with single lines of diamond-shaped points" and 2) some "link-like" ornaments resembling "the stud links of a ship's cable" or "two plain links." The author is uncertain about the antiquity of these ornaments on Fijian clubs and one of his concluding remarks is the following: "Failing proof of antiquity, it appears to me that the ornamentation most probably originated either by articles brought from New Zealand to Fiji by missionaries, traders, or whalers, or else by some of their Maori sailors decorating the weapons of the Fijians with the New Zealand patterns."<sup>124</sup>

As an illustration of these clubs with so-called Maori ornaments we publish a photo of a pineapple club from the Peabody Museum collections,

<sup>123</sup> See for instance, William J. Phillips, *Carved Maori houses of western and northern areas of New Zealand*. Dominion Museum Monograph No. 9. Wellington, 1955. Fig. 21, p. 58. Of special interest is fig. 149, p. 256, a reproduction of a water-colour made at the Bay of Islands in 1827 by Augustus Earle: "Wharepuni (The Residence of a New Zealand Chief)." On it a teketeke is seen at the maihi apex of the house and as far as we can judge from the print the arms and hands are placed asymmetrically. Another figure with an asymmetrical position of arms and hands is published by Irmgard Moschner in: *Katalog der Neuseeland-Sammlung (A. Reischek)*, Wien. Archiv für Völkerkunde, vol. 13, Vienna, 1958. Pl. I. Fig. 3. P. 96. This figure (Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna, no. 42.611) was apparently collected not far from the Bay of Islands but as late as in 1879. It was found at Pah Marikura and had probably been at the top of a stockade post.

<sup>124</sup> *Memoirs of the National Museum*, Melbourne. No. 4. Pp. 54–57. Pl. VIII.

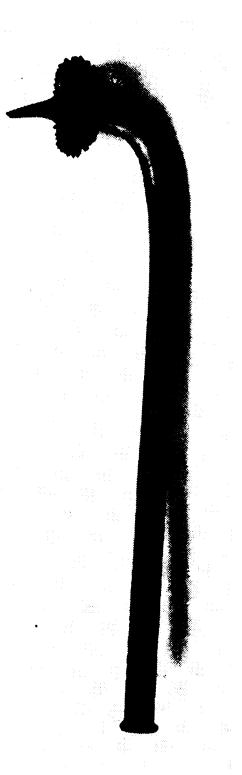


Fig. 52. Fijian club in the Peabody Museum, Salem. H.: About 95 cm. — E 18601.

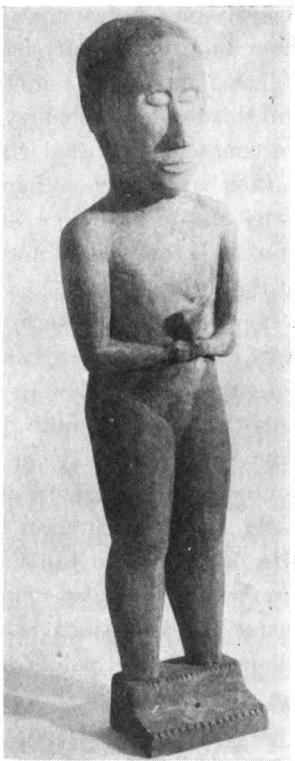


Fig. 53. Wooden figure from Samoa. H.: 69 cm. — Peabody Museum, Salem, E 5309.

no. E 18601 (fig. 52). This club is — as far as documentation can say — of an earlier date than the clubs described by Walcott. It was collected somewhere between 1830 and 1850 by an officer of the U. S. Navy. On most of its handle — except the lower end — we find a spiral band of parallel ridges enclosing beaded lines. This pattern is similar to what we have already found on Walcott's clubs and it is common among the Maori. At the lower end, which is entirely decorated, we find curved ridges giving a link-like appearance, these are also typical Maori.

The University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge has some Fijian clubs with ornate decorations of this kind. Three of five clubs which I have seen, are localized within the Group. They are a pineapple club from Viti Levu Bay (Z 3111), a straight club from Na Vuavua,

Raki Raki (Z 3273) and a horn club from Levuka, Ovalau (Z 3068). All were collected about 1875. About the club from Viti Levu Bay we have the following information: "This form of Totokia (pineapple club) is termed Vaka Nairai in the Nandrongan dialect and is owing to some peculiarity in its carving which was first worked in the island of Nairai." Nairai is an island south of Koro in the Koro Sea.

It would be interesting to know which museum has the oldest documented club with so-called Maori patterns.

The Peabody Museum provides us with another object which may be of some interest for our study of images in a situation of culture contact, a wooden figure from Samoa, no. E 5309 (fig. 53). In the catalogue it was described as "figurehead of canoe" but the provenience, Samoa, had been questioned. In a label on the back of the figure one can read "Figure Head of Canoe." Readable is also: "Navigators Islands. Lat. 14° S. Long. 171° 40' W". By consulting ships' registers Mr. M. V. Brewington, Assistant Director of the Peabody Museum, helped me to interpret some more words of the label as "Youngs. Stieglitz. Aug. 1846". Captain Youngs was commander on the "Stieglitz" when she sailed from Bridgeport in 1844 and returned in 1849. In the Peabody Museum records the figure was described as follows: "*Figure* carved of a single piece of wood. Hands in front holding a tapa beater. Legs are cut off at the ankles and the figure sets on a block. Signs of red and black paint about the head. Height 69 cm. Received before 1867. Donor unknown." When examining the figure I found that the "mallet" had been painted in black and at the ears were traces of red paint. The top of the head had also been painted black. The notches on the block could be found in Samoan wood carving. But are the hands holding a "tapa beater"? Could it not be something that is similar to a Maori *mere*? For comparison I refer to a Maori wooden image in the Oldman collection, no. 681.<sup>125</sup>

#### *Channels of communication in the Pacific*

The China trade and the whaling industry were certainly two factors of importance in the social — and cultural — history of the Pacific Ocean at the end of the 18th century and during the first half of the next.

Chinese tea and silks had to be paid for and while the British paid in specie and eastern products, as opium, sharks' fins and birds' nests, the

<sup>125</sup> *Memoirs of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 14: *Skilled handwork of the Maori. Being the Oldman collection of Maori artifacts illustrated and described.* 2nd ed., Wellington, 1946. Pl. 72.

Americans had some trouble in getting a suitable medium for the Canton market until Boston merchants found out that fur from the Northwest Coast could be shipped over the Pacific and used as payment for Chinese goods in Canton. This meant not only the opening of an important trade route over Oahu in Hawaii but also the creation of a channel for diffusion of goods and ideas, the extent and meaning of which remains to be investigated by Pacific ethnohistory. The first ship on the new route was the "Columbia" which returned to Boston in 1790 and from "Owyhee" brought a native who walked up State Street dressed in colourful feather helmet and cloak. The Boston Nor'westmen rounded Cape Horn and their route was: Boston — Northwest Coast — Canton — Boston. The fur which they got in Nootka Sound was mainly that of the sea-otter and on board most of the trading vessels (small brigs and ships were most successful) was a metal-worker "to make tools and weapons to order." The vessels "broke their voyage at least twice; at the Cape Verde Islands, the Falklands, sometimes Galapagos for a giant tortoise, and invariably Hawaii." This Northwest fur trade, "Boston's high-school of commerce," was by 1792 "fairly established" and did not diminish before the 1820's. By 1837 the traffic was a thing of the past.<sup>126</sup>

In Hawaii sandalwood was soon discovered, another commodity much sought after by the Chinese, and this meant one more impetus for trade over Hawaii. This sandalwood trade was extended to other islands in the South Seas where the fragrant wood was found, as Vanua Levu in Fiji. The sandalwood trade in Fiji has already been mentioned in our historical record of culture contacts in the Group. Lockerby's Journal of 1808—09 is the classic account. Later on in the 19th century we find sandalwood traders, for example, in the New Hebrides.<sup>127</sup>

Salem, north of Boston, was from the 1820's engaged in the bêche de mer trade, a traffic which came into being through a Chinese demand for a certain soup ingredient. Salem vessels preferred doubling the Cape of Good Hope and often visited the Bay of Islands in northern New Zealand or Tahiti on their way out. The cargoes were sold in Manilla and the ships usually returned to Fiji for a second and a third cargo before going home

<sup>126</sup> S. E. Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts 1783—1860*. Cambridge, Mass., 1921. Pp. 46 f, 50, 54, 57 ff, 261.

<sup>127</sup> Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts*. Pp. 59, 261. J. I. Brookes, *International rivalry in the Pacific islands 1800—1875*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1941. Pp. 31 f. J. W. Davidson, *Peter Dillon and the discovery of sandalwood in the New Hebrides*. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*. Vol. XII, Paris, 1956. Pp. 99—105.

to New England. This Salem trade lasted to the time of the Civil War. The first Salem vessel on a trading voyage to Fiji, however, was probably the brig "Active" which left Salem for Fiji and Canton in 1810 and returned home in 1812. This was in the days of the sandalwood trade.<sup>128</sup>

Salem more than any other place in Europe or America represented for the Fijians the outer world, as Boston did for Hawaii and maybe Port Jackson (Sydney) for the Maori at the Bay of Islands. Thokanauto, a Fijian chief from Rewa, was by the master of the "Peru," J. H. Eagleston, in 1831 given the name of Phillips after the bark's owner, Stephen C. Phillips of Salem, and by that name "he was ever after called." The Fijian Mr. Phillips accompanied Eagleston on a voyage to Tahiti — on board the "Emerald" — in 1834 and met there in Papeete Pomare, the Queen of Tahiti, and presented her with Fijian pottery. Mr Phillips when returning from this visit landed the first cattle in Fiji, a bull calf and a cow calf, both called Bula Ma Cow by Eagleston, the donor. "Having some little difficulty in expressing name of each to the natives", writes Eagleston in his journal, "I classed the two in one, and called them Bula Ma Cow, which was very readily taken up by the natives whose curiosity was centered on the strange and wonderful Kie Papalange Bula Ma Cow."<sup>129</sup>

The Boston Nor'westmen were followed round Cape Horn by the New England whalers. But the first whaling ship to sail round the Horn was a British ship, the "Emelia," of London, who as early as in 1788 carried the sperm whale fishery to the Pacific Ocean, i. e., before the North West fur trade had begun. The first known whaling grounds were off Chile and Peru and during the 1790's British whalers began "fishing" off the northern coast of New Zealand and in the waters between Australia and New Zealand. The "Syren," another British ship opened in 1819 the fishing in the northwestern Pacific, in the waters later known as the "coast of Japan." The fur trade abating, Hawaii now got a new and important role as base for the whalers. By 1830 Hawaii was "the commercial Gibraltar of the Pacific."<sup>130</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts*. Pp. 53, 94, 219. G. G. Putnam, *Salem vessels and their voyages*. Series IV. Salem, Mass., 1930. Pp. 36 ff, 152, 161 ff.

<sup>129</sup> Putnam, *Salem vessels and their voyages*. IV. P. 155. J. H. Eagleston's journals of voyages in the bark Peru, 1830—3, and in the ship Emerald, 1833—6. Peabody Museum, Salem, M 656 1830 P 2.

<sup>130</sup> Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts*. Pp. 50, 263. Robert Mc Nab, *From Tasman to Marsden. A history of northern New Zealand from 1642 to 1818*. Dunedin, 1914. Pp. 95 ff. F. D. Bennett, *Narrative of a whaling voyage round the globe, from the year 1833 to 1836*. London, 1840. Vol. II. Pp. 185 ff. Brookes, *International rivalry in the Pacific islands*. P. 11.

The places of refreshment most visited by sperm whalers between 1800 and 1820 had been Tahiti and the Bay of Islands and from 1820 Hawaii has to be included. "These were the harbours where, twice every year, the larger part of the whaling fleet swung riotously in." The Americans dominated in Honolulu where in 1835 "a thousand whalers might be ashore at once, making even consuls walk cautiously." But American whalers were numerous in the Bay of Islands too. This harbour was in 1836 visited by 49 American sperm whalers as against 64 English and colonials.<sup>131</sup>

The growth of the sperm whale fishery in the northern Pacific from the beginning of the 1820's is best illustrated by the following figures. In 1822 60 whalers put in at Honolulu, and in 1844 more than 400 whaling ships arrived.

The historian J. I. Brookes says in his work "International rivalry in the Pacific islands 1800—1875" that "the three [United States] consular appointments which followed that of Hawaii, namely at Tahiti (1835), New Zealand (1838), and Samoa (1839), were probably dictated more by the interests of whaling than by those of general trade."

Samoa is here included and it can be mentioned that Apia in Samoa could see 30 whalers in a season.<sup>132</sup>

The whalers went to Hawaii, Tahiti and the Bay of Islands in New Zealand not only for supply but also for recruiting. It is well known that natives from the Pacific and from the American North West Coast<sup>133</sup> were in the crews of whalers and trading vessels early in the 19th century. Keith Sinclair in "A history of New Zealand" (London, 1959, p. 35) describes the situation as follows: "In the first decade of the nineteenth century the coastal tribes of Maoris helped to cut timber for spars, to drag the great trunks down to sea and river and to load them on to the ships. They sailed in the whalers as crew. . . . Gradually, especially at the Bay of Islands, an extensive trade grew up." This traffic which resulted in Maoris being left behind at Sydney, caused the Governor Gidley King in 1805 to put the recruiting of the New Zealanders under control. The Governor personally examined the conditions of the islanders in Sydney. "He had the various Natives, including the New Zealanders, assembled at Government House."<sup>134</sup>

<sup>131</sup> Brookes, *International rivalry in the Pacific islands*. Pp. 12, 29.

<sup>132</sup> Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts*. P. 264. Brookes, *International rivalry in the Pacific islands*. P. 29.

<sup>133</sup> Marius Barbeau, *Haida myths illustrated in argillite carvings*. National Museum of Canada. Bull. no. 127. Ottawa, 1953. P. 1.

<sup>134</sup> Mc Nab, *From Tasman to Marsden*. Pp. 101 f.

American whalers from New Bedford and Nantucket were — from the 1820's — "flocking to Hawaii, to 'recruit,' as they called it, with fresh provisions and Kanakas." Natives of Hawaii had begun, however, early in the 19th century to serve as sailors in foreign vessels and several in this way visited the United States.<sup>135</sup>

Bennett who was in the South Seas some years of the 1830's says about the men from Tahiti that "many . . . engage themselves to ships frequenting their island, when they speedily perform duties of ordinary seamen with steadiness and ability." The "Tuscan," the whaling ship in which Bennett sailed, had herself Society Islanders on board and shipped once some Marquesans from Hawaii to their home island. The Marquesans had been left at Oahu by a whaler. When the "Tuscan" passed the Marquesas at another time and visited one of the islands in the Group Bennett found some Society and Sandwich Islanders residing there.<sup>136</sup>

An interesting study would be to find out how often natives from different groups of islands in the Pacific occur in the lists of the European and American vessels. We know for instance, that Hawaiians and Maoris are often found as seamen. A study of log-books would give a more accurate picture of the channels of intercourse in the Pacific during the last century.

In our search for documents telling us about native sailors in vessels to Fiji we discovered in Salem a "Memorandum for the Fegee Islands 1830": "A vessel bound to the Fegee Islands requires a large crew and it is best to touch at the Island of New Zealand and take 10 or 12 of the natives of this place, rather than take men from any other of the South Sea Islands or from Manilla (except such as have been this voyage previous) and they should be particularly careful not to take any men from the Navigators Islands — as they are too treacherous and cannot be depended upon.<sup>137</sup> We know also that the "Glide," one of the Salem bêche de mer vessels, shipped six Maoris from the Bay of Islands to Fiji in 1829. They showed a bias for running away from the ship during its stay in the Group. In 1831 the "Glide" was wrecked at the northern coast of Vanua Levu and we are not told about what happened to the Maoris afterwards.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Morison, *The maritime history of Massachusetts*. Pp. 263 f. C. S. Stewart, *Private journal of a voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and residence at the Sandwich Islands, in the years 1822 . . . 1825*, New York, 1828. P. 18.

<sup>136</sup> Bennett, *Narrative of a whaling voyage*. Vol. I. Pp. 71, 284 & 286. Vol. II. Pp. 24 f.

<sup>137</sup> The papers of Joseph Winn, Jr. Peabody Museum, Salem. An extract of a letter furnished by Capt. [Joshua] Kinsman, 18th September 1830.

<sup>138</sup> We draw here both upon William Endicott's "Narrative" and his log-book. William Endicott, *Wrecked among cannibals in the Fijis*. Publications of the Marine Research Society, Salem, Massachusetts. III. Portland, Me, 1923. Pp. 17, 24. Endicott's log, M 656 1829 G 3, Peabody Museum, Salem; 1829: 23.9, 24.10, 19 & 21.11, 7.12.

Unfortunately I have not been successful in getting a full and detailed picture of the part played by different South Sea islanders in the crews of ships bound to Fiji in the preceding decades. But we know, for instance, that among the white men who lived in Mbau and were killed in 1813 at Wailea — when Charles Savage met his death — were "two lascars, a Chinaman, and an Otaheitan."<sup>139</sup> And in 1814 a boat was sent from the brig "Campbell Macquarie" to "the island of Hyleea." In this boat's crew was "Bubbahae (a native of Owhyhee), accompanied by two women — one a native of a Feejee island, taken from hence, and the other taken on board during the voyage, at her own request, as an attendant on her."<sup>140</sup>

### *Two problems*

Two related questions have been asked in our study: Did human figures, collected in Fiji, belong to a Fijian tradition and how were they treated, — were they worshipped?

We know that images were found in Fiji and a style analysis of them shows common traits with Tongan figures but at the same time there are some characteristics which can be regarded as peculiar to the figures found in Fiji. However, we do not meet that stability of style which is discernible in the Tongan figures and in traditional art generally. It looks as if there had been a trial and error system causing some heterogeneity which cannot wholly be explained as a market phenomenon. It is not so that pieces from different parts of Oceania have turned up at Levuka and then have been collected there, except maybe in some single case.

We hope that some new documents will be found some day and that they will throw more light upon 19th century Fiji and its images and upon possible relations to foreign impulses. We have tried to get material about a Maori influence before 1840 when the Wilkes' images were acquired but the empirical foundation does not allow us to speak here about more than a possibility.

A stimulus for further research are the tree fern figures from the last decades of the century. Kleinschmidt says that tree fern figures were brought to Fiji by natives of Gaua (Santa Maria) in the Banks Islands. It happened that they took the carved images along when they went to Fiji to work on the plantations. This example of culture contact is interesting not so much on account of its giving us a clue to a possible origin of the tree fern figures — the Fijians could have got the idea to carve in the

<sup>139</sup> Communicated to the Sydney Gazette of Oct. 23rd, 1813.

<sup>140</sup> Sydney Gazette. No. 588. — March 11th, 1815.

same kind of wood from some of the labourers coming from an island where tree fern carving was common — but for the study of small colonies of natives living among people in a foreign country. Old photos and drawings of the habitations of the imported labourers might tell us something about how these islanders lived and whether they kept to their own traditions in housing and wood-carving.

Fiji and Tonga were one area of communication and it is often difficult and sometimes meaningless to speak about things as respectively Tongan and Fijian. We find, however, things that are more common in one of the areas. For instance, we observed human images in low relief on typical Fijian clubs and this may bear some result for our study as we know of many more Tongan clubs with anthropomorphs than Fijian ones. We do not expect to find the origin of a custom where it is rare.

Another comparison between Fiji and Tonga is probably also of some significance. While the Wesleyan missionaries in the Friendly Islands could speak of a lot of images and acquire not so few of them at the conversion of the natives to Christianity in the 1830's, the missionaries working in the Fiji Group (some of them had been in Tonga before) collected during the 1840's and the 1850's (when Mbau was converted) only pieces as "Mbui ni Kauvandra" and "the goddess of some of the Mbau King's carpenters."

This comparison takes us to our second question: Were images in Fiji worshipped? The missionaries in Tonga saw a religious change taking place at which Taufa'ahau could desecrate some of his earlier "gods" by hanging them up by their necks. In Fiji a piece of bark-cloth suspended from the ridge-pole of the *mbure kalou* could be taken away and missionaries could be struck by a Fijian's reverence for a monolith dressed in a *liku*, a woman's dress, but human images were never mentioned as being rejected at the conversion to the Christian religion.

We have earlier mentioned that the human images in Fiji can be placed in two groups when we deal with our information about them. There is a group of wooden images, some of them collected as early as in 1840, of which we can say that they had been found at least as ornamental parts of *mbure kalou*. "The goddess of some of the Mbau King's carpenters" was said to have received certain acts of worship from the carpenters, but this note is occasional in our records and we base our opinion upon Williams' statement that the Fijians had no "idols." He meant that images in human form were not worshipped. But we can only have Williams as an authority on islands and areas visited by him. He did not know very much of the interior parts of Viti Levu.

Conspicuous in our second group are some whale tooth images collected in Fiji during the eighteen seventies. Our information about the *Lilavatu*, one of the twin figures in the form of a suspension hook, gives this image a place at the side of the inspired priest whose ritual background was the *mbure kalou*. And it was said that a *kalou* had entered the image which means that we have a case of spirit-possession analogous to what we find in Fijian shamanism. The image could even "speak." In the same group is the *Andi Waimaro*, the female image made of pieces of "ivory" pegged together. Here our observations (by Deane and Higginson) are of a later date. This image was probably by a group of people regarded as their ancestress, their *vu*. It was carefully hidden in what earlier would have been a *mbure kalou*. And it is impossible here not to think of how carefully also the Tongans kept their shrines. These were wrapped and "hidden from the eyes of all except the companion or keeper of the god and the other sacred things" according to John Thomas.

The *Andi Waimaro* and another male figure, the *Tui Waimaro*, held — as we are told — in themselves the welfare of the group of people whose *vu* they were and this concerned especially the high-born line of this kin group. The female figure had at the same time some relation to fertility as a boy looking at it would forfeit his power to propagate offspring.

If these figures had been found by Williams when he was in Fiji he would have obtained another result from his investigation of images. He would at least have admitted that there were figures to which one paid respect. Another question — and we have now to go back to our first problem — is whether the whale tooth images collected during the 1870's and later really belonged to a Fijian tradition. Were they strangers — we know they were rare — that had found a place in Fijian ritualism? It is difficult to answer this. Stylistically all three twin figures in the form of suspension hooks are similar to figures in Tonga. The *Andi Waimaro* is more problematic with her hands whose fingers are spread. And this figure has her parts pinned together in a way that may be related to some foreign influence, whether European or not we for the time being cannot say. We need a study about joints in the Pacific islands and their relations to European techniques before we dare to have an opinion. The Fijian Islands with their breast-plates composed of several parts fastened together would be an ideal starting-point for such a study.

As matters are, we do not like to be definite about the origin of the *Andi Waimaro*. In an exceptional case as this some documents are needed informing us about the history of the image. However, we can be more



Fig. 54. Necklace from Fiji with small images of whale tooth. The height of the eight images varies between 9.6 cm and 7.4 cm. The tallest image has a convex horizontal elevation on the upper part of the forehead resembling a frontal band. This image has its hole for suspension in the back of the head while all the other images have it placed high up in the occiput so that it nearly forms a lug. Most of the images have the curvature of the whale tooth, with the legs bending forward. — C-UMAE 2752.

explicit about the twin figures as they are so similar to Tongan images. It would be absurd to deny some kind of affinity. Viti Levu is here, as a place for collecting, included in a style area where most of the objects concerned were found in the Friendly Islands. With the documents we have now it is impossible to determine whether these whale tooth images also had been made in Fiji. The center for the style — both wooden and "ivory" images are included — is, however, easiest to place in the Tongan Group.

Inadequate knowledge of phenomena appearing both in Tonga and in Fiji has sometimes hampered us in our comparisons between the two Groups when we wanted to know whether some institutions were the same in both areas or had a different meaning. It is easy to find the same careful wrapping and hiding of the Andi Waimaro and of the Tongan whale tooth "idols" but after that the difficulties arise with the question: Were Fijians

and Tongans paying respect to objects with the same cultural and social background or with different ones?

Our research is therefore opening out into a more comprehensive study of a comparative nature: a comparison between the Fijian and Tongan religious systems. This would mean our comparing of cult-houses in both areas, of shamanism and of sacred objects — of which the images may or may not form a part as we have found in our study of the Fijian images.

## THE CONCH SHELLS OF FIJI



## THE CONCH SHELLS OF FIJI<sup>1</sup>

Generally speaking, there is no special device for varying the note in a shell which is being used as a trumpet. As in other trumpets and horns the note can be varied by the lips which act as a valve. Occasionally a varying of the note is attained through the placing of a part of the hand in the opening of the shell.

The Fiji Islands can show, what is rather unique, a shell-trumpet with a "finger-hole," situated in the body-whorl near the opening of the shell. This is on a special kind of shell called *Bursa lampas* Lamarck (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> In Fiji both end-blown and side-blown shell trumpets are found, and of these two types the side-blown ones are generally tritons, *Charonia tritonis* Linné (fig. 2), and the end-blown shells *Bursa lampas* Lamarck. Working on the distributions of objects localized within Fiji I was struck by the fact that so many of the end-blown *Bursa lampas* shells had been collected in the central parts of Viti Levu and this led to an investigation of the Fijian conch shells.

As a matter of fact, we do not know much about the use of the "finger-hole" on the *Bursa lampas* shells. J. D. E. Schmeltz says in the catalogue of the Godeffroy collections, later scattered, that the round hole near the mouth of the shell was made for modulating the note.<sup>3</sup> He had, however, as far as I know, no field experience of Fiji and we do not know whether he had been informed by Theodor Kleinschmidt or not in this matter. Kleinschmidt collected in Fiji for the Godeffroy Museum.

Mr. R. A. Derrick, Curator of the Fiji Museum, Suva, writes in a letter upon my inquiry about Fijian shell trumpets with "finger-hole" that he has

<sup>1</sup> This is a revised and enlarged version of a paper in Swedish, *Snäcktrumpeterna på Fiji*, published in the Annual Report of the Ethnographical Museum, Gothenburg, for 1954, pp. 13 ff. Gothenburg, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> My thanks are due to Professor N. Odhner, Stockholm, and to Dr. B. Hubendick, Gothenburg, for advice in matter of nomenclature of shells.

<sup>3</sup> J. D. E. Schmeltz and R. Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abtheilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg*. Hamburg, 1881. P. 172: "Am Hinterrande der Mündung, nahe der Spindel ein rundes Loch eingebohrt, um den Ton zu moduliren."

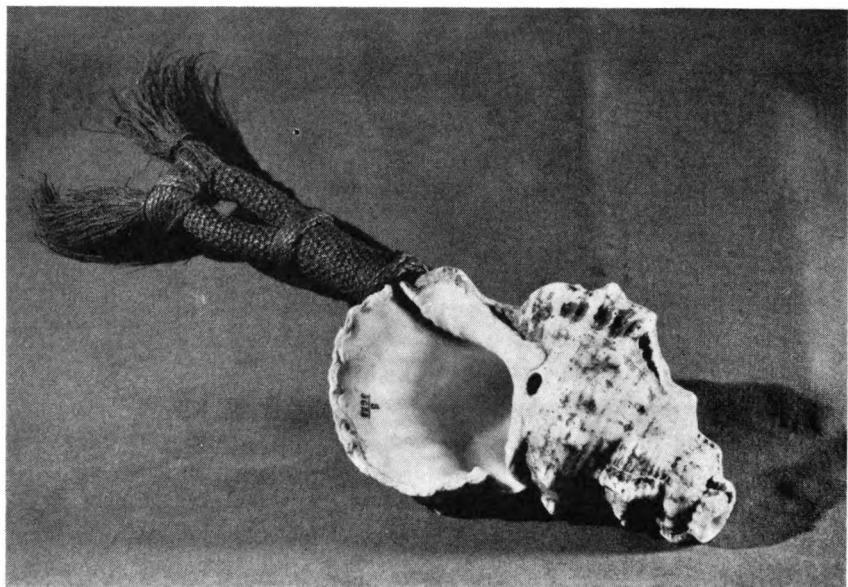


Fig. 1. *Bursa lampas* Lamarck with sound-hole at the end and "finger-hole." Length of shell only, 22 cm. Sinnet attachment with loop and tufts about 25 cm long. Fiji.  
— AMNH, S. 3623.

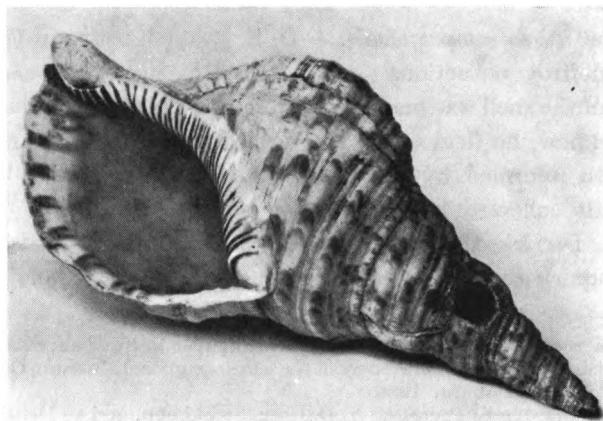


Fig. 2. *Charonia tritonis* Linné. Side-blown. Collected in Fiji in 1838. Dumont d'Urville's collection. — ML.

blown such shells taken from his museum's collection, "and they effectively give two tones and by operating with the finger they give a fluctuating sound."<sup>4</sup> One of the Marist missionaries in Fiji, the Rev. Father R. Jarre, writes in a letter from Mbemana, Viti Levu, as follows about shell trumpets, *ndavui*, which have "en plus de l'orifice d'insufflation, un trou pratiqué vers le milieu du coquillage et qui est obstrué avec le doigt. Le doigt est alternativement retiré et remis en place, ce qui permet de rythmer le son et de lui ajouter des saccades tout en continuant à souffler."<sup>5</sup> Father Jarre does not tell us whether he is specifically writing about the *Bursa* shells.

### *Tritons*

In our conch shell research we have obtained some information, more or less detailed, about seventy Fijian trumpet shells in museum collections. Twenty-seven of them are tritons, forty *Bursa lampas* shells. In three cases I am not sufficiently informed about the species. Of the twenty-seven tritons three only are localized within Fiji. They are side-blown and come from Lovoni, Ovalau (AM, E. 33615), Viti Levu (MC, 23<sup>1</sup>, fig. 3; "much esteemed by the Kai-colo of Fiji who obtained them from the Kai-wai, Fiji") and the Yasawa Islands (BPBM, C. 9805). Two side-blown tritons were, furthermore, from Dumont d'Urville's "Voyage au Pôle Sud,"<sup>6</sup> in 1838 visiting Fiji (ML, fig. 2) and three other side-blown shells were from Wilkes' expedition, in Fiji in 1840 (USNM, nos. 2906—2908). Both these expeditions visited the Koro Sea area and coastal regions of Fiji. A side-blown small triton (length, 19 cm) in the Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig, Me 6426, earlier in the Godeffroy collections, was blown in connection with turtle-fishing in the night and on war canoes,<sup>7</sup> so this cannot have its origin in, for example, inland Viti Levu.

<sup>4</sup> Letter, 17.5. 1955.

<sup>5</sup> Letter, 12.9. 1956.

<sup>6</sup> These shells belong to a collection from Dumont d'Urville's expedition "vers le Pôle Sud" (1838—1840) which the La Rochelle museum got from the Musée de la Marine in Paris. *Les Musées de Genève*. February, 1956. E. Pittard, *A la mémoire d'un directeur de musée d'ethnographie*.

<sup>7</sup> Schmeltz and Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abtheilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg*. No. 3286. p. 172, is identical with the Leipzig specimen. — Kleinschmidt writes in his "Reisen auf den Viti-Inseln," *Journal des Museum Godeffroy*, vol. 14, Hamburg, 1879, p. 269: "Die grosse Muschel (*Triton tritonis*) Trompete, "Ndavui", wird auf Kriegscanoes oder wenn Nachts Schildkröte im Netz gefangen werden, geblasen und ist weit hörbar." One wonders whether the Leipzig shell, as an individual piece, had really the record given by Schmeltz or whether the shell as a Fijian triton had been placed in the group of conchs used on the occasion of turtle-catching and on war canoes. Yet it is clear that tritons were used so.

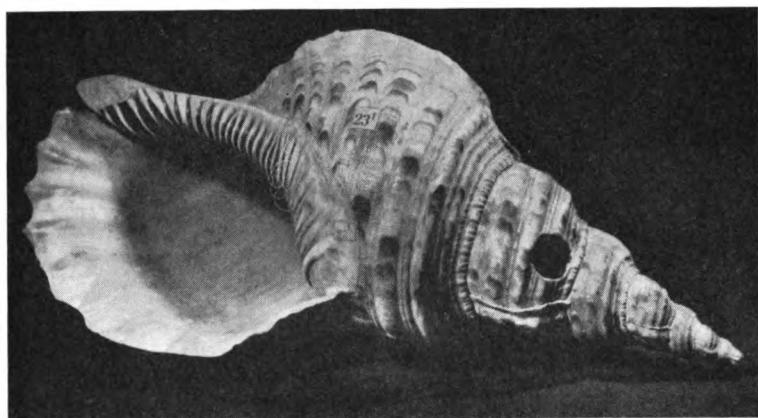


Fig. 3. *Charonia tritonis* Linné. From Viti Levu. Side-blown. "Much esteemed by the Kai-colo of Fiji [the people of the interior of Viti Levu] who obtained them from the Kai-wai, Fiji [the people at the coast]." Length, 34 cm. Lord Stanmore's collection. — MC, 23<sup>1</sup>.

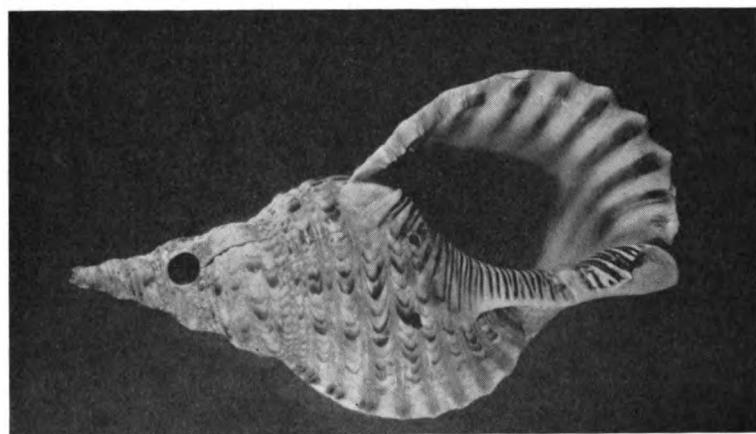


Fig. 4. *Charonia tritonis* Linné. Side-blown and with a "finger-hole." Length, 37 cm. Acquired by the South Australian Museum, Adelaide, in 1926. A. 13082.

Of the twenty-seven tritons all except two are side-blown. One of the exceptions is a triton in the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard, no. 55314, given to the museum by Alexander Agassiz who was in Fiji in 1897—98. This end-blown shell has a “finger-hole” similar to that on the *Bursa lampas* shells and also a sinnet-loop, common on the end-blown *Bursa* shells. The only other triton with a “finger-hole” which I know of is in the South Australian Museum, Adelaide, A. 13082 (fig. 4). This is a side-blown trumpet shell. The second end-blown triton in our record of trumpet shells in museums is in the Auckland Institute and Museum, no. 14681.

The blowing-hole on the side-blown triton is on the same side as the mouth of the shell, but starting from the opening of the shell we do not always find this hole in the same whorl. In this matter we have more precise information about thirteen of our side-blown tritons: of these eight specimens have their blowing-hole in the whorl next after the body-whorl and five in the second whorl after the body-whorl. The holes are more or less quadrangular and the edges are not smooth but rough. In this regard they are not the same as the circular “finger-holes” on the *Bursa lampas* shells and on the two tritons with such holes. These holes have smooth edges which look as if they had been bored and ground.

#### *Bursa shells*

Among the *Bursa lampas* shells we find more specimens which are localized within Fiji, twenty (with a less rigorous evaluation perhaps twenty-five) of forty shells. Eight of the localized shells come from the Muanivatu “mountains” [“Berge”] (L-MfV, Me 6420—6425; V-MfV, no. 11841; PR, no. 130. J. 25, label inside the shell: “Museum Godeffroy. Manivatu = Mountain, Viti Levu”) and three from Mbukutia (C-UMAE, Z 2885; MC, nos. 23<sup>2</sup> and 23<sup>3</sup>). Other shells are from the Koroinasau district, from Nakorokula and Nandronga (C-UMAE, Z 3311, 3313 (fig. 5) and 2886 respectively) and from Serua (BM, +2396). Two are from the “interior” of Viti Levu (L-RvV, no. 265—154; LP, no. 1498/G.). A shell in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (no. 130. J. 27) has been localized through what is written inside the shell with a pencil: “But Lutra, Tabuarua’s shell. . .” Tambuarua was from Mbemana.<sup>8</sup> In the same museum there is another

---

<sup>8</sup> Sir Arthur Gordon (ed.), *Letters and notes written during the disturbances in the highlands (known as the “devil country”) of Viti Levu, Fiji 1876*. Edinburgh, 1879. Vol. I, pp. 421 f. and 436. Vol. II, pp. 226 f. and 256.

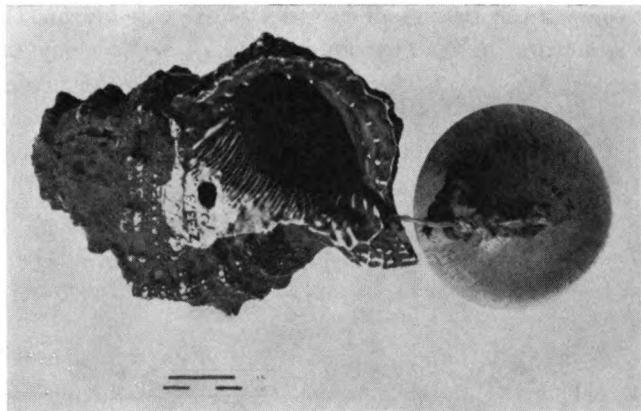


Fig. 5. Small *Bursa lampas* Lamarck (length, 15 cm) with coconut cup for kava attached to it. From native temple at Nakorokula. "Finger-hole." Anatole von Hügel's collection, about 1875. — C-UMAE, Z 3313.

shell (Balfour coll., 4. 8., no. 55) about which we can read in the catalogue that it belonged "to Matanvatu Reva who was shot at Nasigatoka." This conch has evidently been in the possession of Remba who was chief at Matanavatu.<sup>9</sup> Both these shells were probably collected during the disturbances in the highlands of Viti Levu in 1876. Another shell, in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh (1924. 803) was according to the catalogue "used in the last war in 1876" and can be placed in the same category.

Besides these twenty shells there are five more which may be included in the group of end-blown *Bursa* shells which are localized, viz., five shells in the Fiji Museum, Suva. These five shells had been described as originating in Tholo, the central hill districts of Viti Levu; however, this had been questioned.

Muanivatu, Mbukutia, Nakorokula, Mbemana, Matanavatu and the Koroinasau district are all in the interior of Viti Levu located in the central and western regions. Two shells are localized in such a general manner that they can have been found at the coast but also in the hinterland of the two areas. They are from Serua in the south of Viti Levu and from Nandronga in the south-west of the island.

---

<sup>9</sup> Ib. Vol. I. P. 433. "One of the chief leaders of the cannibals."

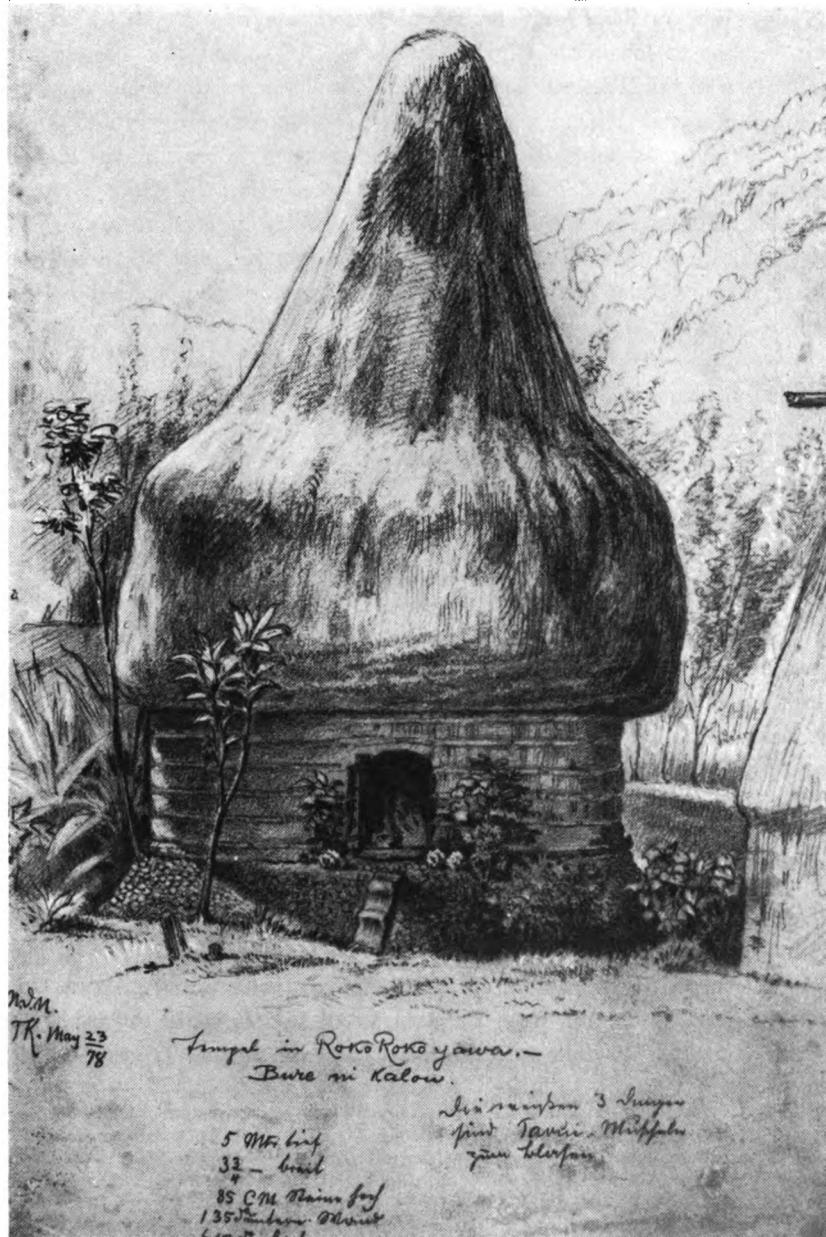


Fig. 6. Drawing by Theodor Kleinschmidt showing a *mbure ni kalou*, a native temple, at Narokorokoyawa, Viti Levu, in May 1878. Shells are seen at the entrance. — Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte, Hamburg.

A drawing by Theodor Kleinschmidt and a photo by A. M. Hocart both help us to localize end-blown *Bursa* shells. Kleinschmidt's drawing (fig. 6), now in the Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte in Hamburg, is from 1878 and depicts a *mbure ni kalou* at Narokorokoyawa.<sup>10</sup> At the entrance there are some conch shells lying and it is possible to identify them as end-blown *Bursa* shells. Hocart's photo (fig. 7), which is in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (B. 523. (Q)), is from Numbautau, Viti Levu, and it shows a *Bursa* trumpet shell suspended with its sinnet-loop from a beam or plate in the interior of a house where a kava bowl and coconut cups for kava-drinking are also seen. Both Narokorokoyawa and Nambautau are in the central hill districts of Viti Levu, and so is Nasauhoko from where we have a photo (fig. 8) taken by Dr. Dorothy Spencer during her field-work in Namataku in 1935—36. Dr Spencer's snap-shot is posed, but it shows a shell which seems to be a triton blown from the end. The shell is without sinnet-loop. Dr. Spencer who was so kind as to send me the photo wrote that according to her recollection "this particular shell was kept inside the *bure kalou*; but I may be mistaken and it may have been at the entrance outside."<sup>11</sup> She also sent me another photo (fig. 9) which she had received from Mr. George Windred; it was probably taken at a village near Lautoka, on the north-west coast of Viti Levu. Here two shells are blown at the same time accompanying the beats on two wooden drums, *lali*. The shells are side-blown and it seems to me that they are of the triton type. It is interesting to see that they are not held with the hands in the same way by the two blowers.

#### *The use of the Bursa shell*

The Leipzig trumpet shells from the Muavatu area are collected by Kleinschmidt and are among the shells registered as "*Lampusia lampas*" by Schmeltz in his catalogue of the Godeffroy collection.<sup>12</sup> About these shells, entered as coming from the interior of Viti Levu in the catalogue, Schmeltz writes as follows: "Benutzt wurden diese Trompeten, wie

<sup>10</sup> This drawing is mentioned in Schmeltz and Krause. *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abteilung des Museum Godeffroy*. P. 540. — I am much indebted to Dr. H. Tischner, Keeper of the South Sea Department at the Museum für Völkerkunde und Vorgeschichte, Hamburg, for showing me Kleinschmidt's drawings in the Museum.

<sup>11</sup> Letter, 9.1. 1955.

<sup>12</sup> Schmeltz and Krause, *Die ethnographisch-anthropologische Abteilung des Museum Godeffroy in Hamburg*. Pp. 171 f. — According to the catalogue of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leyden, no 265—154, in this museum is the same as no. 2197 in the Godeffroy collection. As the Leipzig museum also records this shell, as Me 6424, there must have been a mistake here.



Fig. 7. The interior of a house in Numbautau with a suspended *Bursa* shell.  
Photo by A. M. Hocart. — Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, B. 523. (Q).

Kleinschmidt schreibt, um die Eingeborenen zum Götzendienst zu versammeln und lagen daher solche stets am Eingange der heidnischen Tempel.”<sup>13</sup> This is in contrast to what is said about the triton — also in Leipzig — which is side-blown and was blown in connection with turtle-fishing in the night and on war canoes. It looks as if Kleinschmidt who was probably also the collector of the triton, had made a distinction when speaking about the use of the two species of shells.

Two others of our localized end-blown shells are from native temples: one of the shells in Marischal College from Mbukutia (23<sup>2</sup>) and the shell with an attached coconut cup for kava-drinking, in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Z 3313, fig. 5). This one came from a native temple at Nakorokula which was destroyed in June 1876 during the disturbances. About the Edinburgh conch shell (1924. 803) we are informed that it had been “used in the last war in 1876” which would imply that this end-blown *Bursa* had been a war trumpet. This is supported by the fact that two similar shells in Oxford (no. 130.

<sup>13</sup> Ib. P. 172.

J. 27 and Balfour coll., 4.8., no 55) had belonged to rebels from Tholo during the 1876 uprising, and about at least one of those it is known that he was a chief. Mr. Derrick at the Fiji Museum in Suva mentions in a letter that his Fijian assistant had pointed out that the end-blown *Bursa* shells were known as *ndavui ni valu* or war trumpets. However, he knew of no distinction as to areas in which the two kinds (the end-blown *Bursa* and the side-blown triton) were used.<sup>14</sup>

Puzzling in our investigation of the end-blown *Bursa* shells is also a conch in the Oldman collection (no. 581 a). It is described as "trumpet, used principally in turtle-fishing."<sup>15</sup> But it is not localized within Fiji and the information given may not be original.

### *Vanua Levu and Lau*

It is regrettable that in the museums we have found no shells said to come from, for instance, Vanua Levu — the other large island in the Group — nor from Lau, the group of islands making south-eastern Fiji. This has made our study of distributions within Fiji incomplete. Dr. Laura Thompson who was in the southern Lau group in 1933—34 has in a letter told us that according to her recollection "the conch is blown from the end not from the side." From her stay in Lau she did not recall any "finger-hole" nor more than one note from any conch. She did not inform us about the species used, but she wrote that "conch shells were also used to decorate the grave of a high ranking person and, if I remember correctly, such shells were often smashed in on one side."<sup>16</sup> And she has in her work "Southern Lau, Fiji: an ethnography" published a photo of the grave of the chief of Kambara where some shells are seen which look like tritons,<sup>17</sup> so we are not altogether without knowledge about the species used.

### *Circumstances of collection*

Most of the *Bursa* shell trumpets come from collections made after the cession of Fiji to Great Britain in 1874. Of the forty shells registered

<sup>14</sup> Letter, 15.2. 1954.

<sup>15</sup> *Memoirs of the Polynesian Society*. Vol. 15: *Polynesian artifacts. The Oldman collection*. 2nd ed. New Plymouth, 1953. Pl. 65 and p. 42.

<sup>16</sup> Letter, 11.2. 1954.

<sup>17</sup> Laura Thompson, *Southern Lau, Fiji: an ethnography*. Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Bull. 162. Honolulu, 1940. Pl. 1 B.

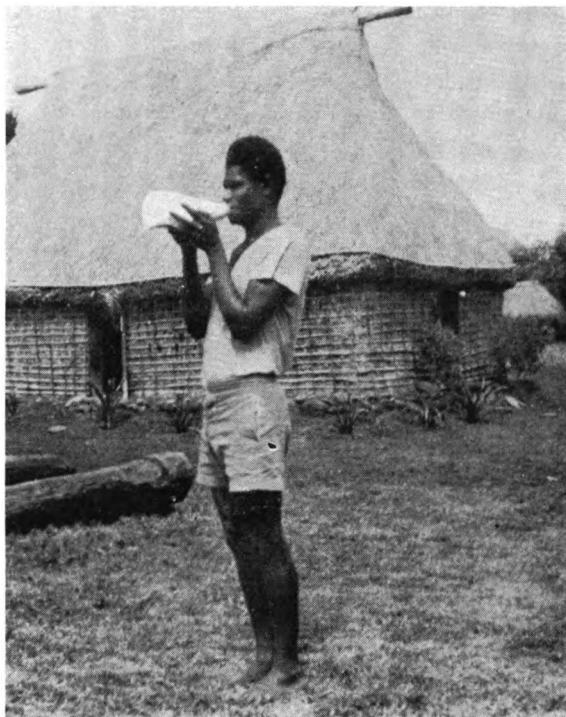


Fig. 8. Conch shell blown at Nasauthoko. Snap-shot by Dorothy Spencer.

by us we can be certain that twenty-three were collected about 1875 and in the two or three following years. We have no real knowledge of how and when the remaining seventeen were collected, but they all seem to be in museum collections acquired after 1875. Of the twenty shells which are localized within Fiji all except one have a history that allows them to be recorded as collected in Viti Levu in the 1870's when the interior parts of the island were opened up. Most of them were collected by Kleinchmidt, von Hügel and Lord Stanmore. Therefore it would be natural to ask whether special circumstances did not favour our localization of the *Bursa* shells to central Viti Levu and adjacent regions. These circumstances would, however, have favoured also a collection of side-blown tritons within the same area and in our records we have, as a matter of fact, such a shell from Viti Levu (MC, 23<sup>1</sup>, fig. 3) acquired by Sir Arthur Gordon, later Lord Stanmore, but in the museum catalogue it is said

that the shells of this kind were "much esteemed by the Kai-colo of Fiji who obtained them from the Kai-wai, Fiji."

The time of the collection is known more precisely for ten out of the twenty-five side-blown tritons recorded in our study. The expeditions of Dumont d'Urvil and Wilkes acquired altogether five shells collected in 1838 and 1840. These are now in La Rochelle (ML) and in Washington (USNM, nos. 2906—2908). Three shells belong to von Hügel's and Lord Stanmore's collections from the 1870's (C-UMAE, Z 2884 and 2497, and MC, 23<sup>1</sup>). Dr. Clellan S. Ford who did field work in the Yasawa Islands of northwestern Viti Levu in the 1930's, brought a shell trumpet from there to Honolulu (BPBM, C. 9805). As far as he knew the natives in the Yasawa Islands never used the end-blown variety.<sup>18</sup> Our tenth shell is in Leipzig (L-MfV, Me 6426). It belonged earlier to the Godeffroy collection and was probably collected by Kleinschmidt in the 1870's.

In addition, there are two triton shells which cannot be of a late date. One in the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard, no. 64, acquired from Harvard College in 1867, and another in the Peabody Museum of Salem, no. 1411, earlier belonging to the East India Marine Society there. This shell is among the pieces in the museum from the period before 1860.

#### *Side-blown tritons in central Viti Levu*

Two Marist Fathers with experience of 20th century Fiji were also asked about the distributions of the different kinds of shell trumpets. The Rev. Father C. E. Verlingue, Procureur Général des Missions Maristes in Rome, wrote that he had been in Fiji for twelve years as a missionary and according to him the conch shell is found in all parts of Fiji. "Ceci s'applique surtout aux conques avec embouchure sur le côté: on les trouve même dans les villages de la montagne du centre de Viti Levu. Celles à embouchure terminale sont beaucoup plus rares. Je n'en ai vu que quelques-unes et dois vous avouer que je ne pensais même pas qu'elles puissent être utilisées comme conques: j'ai cru que les deux ou trois que j'ai vues étaient simplement cassées accidentellement sur le bout et n'ai jamais entendu les Fidjiens s'en servir."<sup>19</sup> The existence of side-blown conchs in central Viti Levu which we know of from the triton in Marischal College (23<sup>1</sup>, fig. 3) is here stated again, as far as our century is concerned. It would be interesting

<sup>18</sup> Letter, 19.2. 1954.

<sup>19</sup> Letter, 8.10. 1954.



Fig. 9. Conch shell blowing and drum beating at a village near Lautoka.

to know what kind of shells (*Bursa lampas* or *Charonia tritonis*) Father Verlingue had in mind when he wrote about conchs that might be blown from the end.

The Rev. Father R. Jarre sent us a letter from Mbemana in Viti Levu "au sujet des 'davui' ou conques." "Le fait est que dans la partie centrale de Viti Levu, presque toutes les conques ont l'orifice percé à l'extrémité pointue du 'Davui.' Par contre dans les Iles de l'Est (je ne parle pas de Vanua Levu que je connais mal) le trou est d'ordinaire sur le côté, à 2 inches environ de la pointe. Il y a également une autre variation dont je n'arrive pas à déterminer les limites géographiques: certains 'Davui' ont, en plus de l'orifice d'insufflation, un trou pratiqué vers le milieu du coquillage et qui est obstrué avec le doigt." Then follows the description of the use of the "finger-hole" already quoted and Father Jarre winds up by saying that conchs without this are also found.<sup>20</sup> As we have seen he does not deny the existence of side-blown shells in central Viti Levu but according to him most of the conchs there are end-blown.

<sup>20</sup> Letter, 12.9. 1956.

*The shells in their natural state*

As shells the conchs belong not only to the cultural but also to the physical environment, to the domain of the malacologist. Both *Bursa* shells and tritons are found in Fiji in their natural state. I have especially been interested in the distribution of the *Bursa lampas* Lamarck in general. Dr. B. Hubendick, Director of the Museum of Natural History in Gothenburg, gave an area of distribution ranging from the Red Sea in the west to at least Fiji in the east.<sup>21</sup> Dr. R. Tucker Abbott, at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, was of the opinion that "this species ranges from East Africa through the Indian Ocean, the East Indies to Melanesia and north to southern Japan. I do not think this species is found in eastern Polynesia or Hawaii."<sup>22</sup> Dr. Yoshio Kondo, at the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, wrote that "the Bishop Museum has specimens from Ceylon, Micronesia (including Mortlock), New Hebrides, Gilbert Islands, and from Ocean Islands at the western end of the Hawaiian Group. None from Fiji as yet."<sup>23</sup> From Dr. Harald A. Rehder, at the United States National Museum in Washington, I got a letter running thus: "The distribution in our collection of the three large species of *Bursa* that have been confused under the name of *lampas* is as follows:

*Bursa lampas* Linné: Zanzibar and Kenya, East Africa to the Ryukyu, Philippine, and Mariana Islands; also from Bikini in the Marshall Islands, and New Caledonia. Our only record from the Fiji Islands is an old one in need of confirmation.

*Bursa bubo* Linné: Zanzibar, Ryukyu Islands, New Caledonia. No record from Fiji.

*Bursa rubeta* Röding: Java, Ryukyu Islands, Philippines, Biak Island off New Guinea, 1 lot from the U. S. Exploring Expedition labelled Fiji Islands.<sup>24</sup> The shells from the expedition mentioned here are apparently from Wilkes' expedition, 1840 in Fiji. It is interesting to record that *Bursa* shells were found but not as shell trumpets. Three side-blown tritons from the same expedition are in the United States National Museum.

About the distribution of the *Bursa* shells within Fiji Dr. Abbott writes that "the answer will have to come from an interrogation of the natives themselves."<sup>25</sup> This survey has not been made. We have another sector

<sup>21</sup> Letter, 19.10. 1954.

<sup>22</sup> Letter, 14.9. 1956.

<sup>23</sup> Letter, 5.9. 1956.

<sup>24</sup> Letter, 18.9. 1956.

<sup>25</sup> Letter, 14.9. 1956.

## FIJI ISLANDS



Fig. 10 Map of the Fiji Islands.

## VITI LEVU



Fig. 11. Map of Viti Levu.

in our investigation where our knowledge is not complete: the background giving the ecology in the Fiji Group.

Finally, as we know of *Bursa* shells elsewhere which are side-blown we cannot build up any theory of the *Bursa* shells as structurally more suitable to having sound-holes at the end.<sup>26</sup>

#### *Conch shells at temples and in caves*

We have already mentioned Kleinschmidt's drawing from 1878 of a *mbure ni kalou* at Narokorokoyawa (fig. 6). It is a fortunate coincidence that one of the Wesleyan missionaries in Fiji, the Rev. Arthur J. Webb, in a lecture in 1890 should speak of the same village, on the Wainimala, and tell us that when he was on a visit two large shell trumpets, called *ndavui* by the Fijians, hung at the entrance to a temple.<sup>27</sup> They were "suspended by stout, elaborately plaited ropes of coconut-fibre, and were the gods of the place." According to what the chief said one of the shells was a god and the other a goddess. The chief claimed that he had heard them exchanging angry words. And the evening before an important event in the tribe the shells had become uneasy. They had inside the temple climbed up one of the end-posts of the building and then gone along the ridgepole. The god and goddess were war divinities. When the Nuyamalu warriors went to attack they blew these divine conchs. The blasts from the trumpets terrified the enemy. The Nuyamalu tribe had at the time of Rev. Webb's visit recently become Christian and the missionary succeeded in buying the shells.<sup>28</sup> It would be worth while to find out where these shells are. They had apparently the sinnet-loop, common on *Bursa* shell trumpets.

<sup>26</sup> See for instance: J. Kunst, *De inheemse muziek in westelijk Nieuw-Guinea*. Mededeling No. XCIII, Afdeling Culturele en Physische Anthropologie No. 38, Koninklijke Vereeniging Indisch Instituut. Leyden, 1950. Fig. 20 c. (A side-blown *Bursa* shell from northern Dutch New Guinea (p. 37) is here wrongly labelled *Cassis cornuta*.)

<sup>27</sup> In the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, there is a map of Narokorokoyawa in Anatole von Hügel's papers. Two *mbure ni kalou* are there marked out: one inside the village moat, at the *rara*, another at a "dancing place" outside the moat.

<sup>28</sup> A. J. Webb, *Observations on the hill tribes of Navitilevu, Fiji*. The Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science. Report 2. Melbourne, 1890. Pp. 624 f. — Without having any historical connection in mind we would like to mention a case of "moving" shells recorded by Professor R. Firth in Tikopia. The god Rata, known in mythic cycles from other Polynesian areas, is there embodied "in the form of a conch shell in the house of Tarafanga. In the night this shell crawls from one end of the house to the other to sleep, so that sometimes it is found at one end, sometimes at the other, irrespective of where it may be put." R. Firth, *Privilege ceremonials in Tikopia*. Oceania, vol. 21. Sydney, 1951. Pp. 168 f.

Rev. David Cargill, another Wesleyan missionary, one of the pioneers, visited in 1839 several villages in the neighbourhood of Rewa. An extract from his journal runs as follows: "At one settlement we visited a heathen temple, to see a number of large shells which are arranged within the sacred precincts of the ground which surrounds the temple. The officiating priest of that temple tells the people, that those shells are sometimes thrown into commotion, and make war on one another, and that the more powerful shells get above and vanquish the weaker ones."<sup>29</sup>

Rev. Cargill must have been accompanied by his colleague Rev. J. Calvert on this visit. In Calvert's journal for 1855 we can read the following: "In coming from Notho, we passed Nalasi, where are about fifteen conchs, very old, which are placed in a row outside a temple. It is said that when any evil is about to spring up at Rawa [Rewa], these conchs begin to fight among themselves — that there is a regular movement among them — & that some have been wounded in their conflicts, the pretended proofs of which are, that holes are in them, & are deprived of parts from their points or edges. Whenever they began to fight, a messenger or priest went to Rawa, and seriously & emphatically reported — the shells were named — & it was said that such a chief had made an attack, & had inflicted a fatal wound or been repulsed. These tales were credited & movements were made accordingly. I saw them sixteen years ago. On this my second visit, we found one was separated from the rest — on a low part of the ground. He was a small fellow, but strong. The chief who accompanied us, said — Aye — they have been fighting — but he is looking up again. He is not mastered. The chief maintained that this was a true establishment."<sup>30</sup>

In our record of conchs at temples we must also include Kleinschmidt's information about the *Bursa* shell trumpets. According to him these were used to call the natives to "Götzendienst" and therefore were found at the entrance of the heathen temples. And two of the *Bursa* shells now in British museums had come from native temples. Mbemana where Tambuarua had lived, is described by Sir Arthur Gordon in his journal for 1876 as a "cluster of small pretty villages" and he writes about "the devil bire still in use, with the 'Kalou vatu' (stone god) and conch shells standing outside the door."<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately we were not informed about the species of the shells at

<sup>29</sup> MMS. Letter, 15.6. 1839.

<sup>30</sup> MMS. J. Calvert's journal, 1855.

<sup>31</sup> Sir Arthur Gordon, *Fiji: records of private and public life, 1875—80.* Vol. II. P. 117.

Nalasi in south-eastern Viti Levu, so our record of *Bursa* shells is in this connection only concerning their use.

That the conch shell was an instrument used when the *mbete*, the native priest and shaman, appeared, and by him, is illustrated by two passages in Calvert's journal. In 1842 he mentions that "a priest at Fulanga [in southern Lau], whose god blows a large shell on his departure after having been invoked, was blowing his shell. When near his mouth a mouse escaped — 'Ah' — said the god by the mouth of the priest — 'a god — a god'<sup>32</sup>. In Oneata, also an island in Lau, Calvert called in the same year on "a priest, who still remains heathen." He sold to Calvert "one of the shells of his god — which is blown when his god, after invocation, departs from him."<sup>33</sup> This passage has another reading when quoted elsewhere: the conch is "blown when he [the priest] invokes his god."<sup>34</sup>

Dr. Thompson tells us that in southern Lau the conch shells (*ndavui*) were kept in the sacred caves. The god entered the shells when he had been appeased by the priest. The priest blew these and it was supposed that it was the voice of the god one heard. An informant told Thompson that when he was young the land people in Kambara went with the priest to a sacred cave during a drought. After the kava ceremony was carried out in front of the cave the priest went in and prayed. When he blew the shell inside the cave the people knew that he had made contact with the god.<sup>35</sup> In difficult times — when there were droughts or hurricanes — the land people (*kai vanua*) who claimed "descent from the earliest known inhabitants of the land,"<sup>36</sup> worshipped at certain sacred places: sacred caves, sacred stones and sacred trees. The most important sacred cave among the Kambara land people is Nggara Kalou, the Cave of the God. In this cave there are shell trumpets which are dedicated to the *kalou*, the god. Thompson's informant, the same one as above, says that the *kalou* "could be contacted most easily in Nggara Kalou." "The soul (*yalo*) of the *kalou* entered the conch shells in Nggara Kalou." Only the priest could enter the cave as intermediary. He prayed there for mana and presented offerings for the people. Thompson thinks that it is possible that her informant has been influenced by his Christian belief.<sup>37</sup>

In western Wangawa which like Kambara is an island in southern Lau,

<sup>32</sup> MMS. In Calvert's letter to Rev. P. Fowler, April 1843.

<sup>33</sup> MMS. Fiji letters, 1841—44.

<sup>34</sup> MMS. Calvert's journal.

<sup>35</sup> Thompson, *Southern Lau, Fiji.* P. 109.

<sup>36</sup> Ib. P. 32.

<sup>37</sup> Ib. P. 108.

there is a cave which is called Noaruarua. It is supposed to be Singampong'i's place of burial. Thompson found bones there from at least three skeletons and eight conch shells lay strewn about the ledge.<sup>38</sup>

### *Ratumaimbulu,*

the Lord of the Land of the Dead in Fiji and at the same a god of fertility, *kalou ni vuata*, a spirit of the crops, was an important god in Mbau. In his diary for December 1839 Rev. W. Cross at neighbouring Viwa has the following to say about Fijian behaviour related to this mythical personage: "Many of the people of Bow & Vewa acknowledge Ratoomaibooloo as one of their principal gods; they say he exists in a large land-serpent, & that on a certain night in the month of December he always bathes. The night they say on which this takes place is when the moon rises about midnight. On the said night the people keep awake & watch for the rising of the moon. When she makes her appearance, they say their god has bathed & they commence shouts of congratulation & praise. Many begin to blow the native trumpet with all their might, out of doors and continue to blow and shout till day light. The trumpets are then taken to the heathen temple & are sacred." There is a ceremony when the god is prayed to and entreated "to be gracious, and grant them fruitful seasons; that there may be no strong wind to destroy the fruit, that famine may be unknown & that they may have plenty to eat."<sup>39</sup>

December is the month when the young shoots of the yams come up from the earth. During that month when Ratumaimbulu visited his people it was forbidden to blow a shell trumpet, to dance, to plant and to fight. Ratumaimbulu had not to be disturbed during his visit. Ratumaimbulu lived in a cave or rather a hole near Namara, not far from Mbau. It was thought that he there took on the form of a snake. He did not like kava as the other gods did. The blasts from the shell trumpet and the wind were supposed to be his food<sup>40</sup>.

### *Invocation of gods*

One more example of conch shell blowing of a ritual character is given by Cross in his Rewa journal for 1838. Cross reports that "the male inhabitants of several towns brought a quantity of mats and whales teeth to

<sup>38</sup> Ib. P. 221.

<sup>39</sup> MMS. Fiji letters, 1835–1840.

<sup>40</sup> Joseph Waterhouse, *The king and people of Fiji: containing a life of Thakombau*. London, 1866. P. 365. Basil Thomson, *The Fijians. A study in the decay of custom*. London, 1908. P. 114.

the king." From one of the "towns" about two hundred men came having with themselves more than four hundred mats. "About 80 of them sat down in the front of the king's house, and beat time & sung while the others danced." After half an hour "one then withdraw and blew a trumpet shell. I was informed this was to invite the gods to their dance. After blowing for several minutes three young men presented themselves in female attire, as three goddesses. They were profusely anointed from head to foot with oil, and had on their heads wigs resembling dirty white wool on a sheep's back. Two of them had half shells of dried gourds for breasts. Their eyes were partially closed, & not a feature moved. One of the men who had been dancing, presented the first with a whales tooth & in the name of the party desired that the gods would be propitious to them that they might have a good dance & be prosperous. The first goddess slightly examined the tooth & gave it to the second, she gave it to the third who threw it aside to the heap of mats . . . , with the greatest indifference. After receiving about 20 whales teeth, looking at them and throwing them aside as the first, they moved forward into the midst of the dancers, where in a short time their wigs and female attire were put away & the goddesses became men among the other dancers." This party gave afterwards place to a group of men from another "town" with their presents ready.<sup>41</sup>

#### *Conch blowing in times of disaster*

Cross witnessed in the same year at Rewa an earthquake and also now the trumpet shells were used. "About noon the earth shook for a minute . . About 7 o'clock another shock was felt and a third before ten. Many of the natives began to beat their drums, & blow their bugles. I enquired the cause & was informed that they do this to awake their god, who turning in his sleep caused the earth to shake."<sup>42</sup> Conch shell blowing was also practised on the occasion of floods. Cross provides us with an example of this in his Rewa journal from 1839. The trumpet shells were blown when the flood reached the houses and the blasts were mournful. "When the water abated, they [the Fijians] again blew their trumpets but produced a much more pleasing sound than that which was occasioned by the rising of the flood."<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> MMS. Fiji letters, 1835–40. — This interesting example of transvesticism is here recorded only on account of its bearing upon conch shell blowing. As is well known transvesticism is reported also from the Sepik area in New Guinea and from the New Hebrides.

<sup>42</sup> MMS. Fiji letters, 1835–40.

<sup>43</sup> MMS. Fiji letters, 1835–40.

### *War trumpets*

The first mention of the shell trumpet in Fiji is by William Lockerby who visited Vanua Levu in 1808—1809. He says that the shell trumpet was only used in war. One blew it when one wished to challenge the enemy.<sup>44</sup> Osborn records in his log from the "Emerald's" voyage in 1833—1836 the existence of shell trumpets in Fiji in the following way: "Their war conchs are similar to those used by other S. Sea natives."<sup>45</sup>

Our account of trumpet shells in museums has shown that shells were used as war trumpets by the highlanders of Viti Levu during the disturbances in 1876. When Kleinschmidt speaks about the shells at the *mbure ni kalou* as used in the religious ceremonies he has probably described only one of their purposes. Webb tells us that the "temple" shells at Narokorokoyawa were used as war trumpets. And the blowing of conchs in war is recorded from the same area, among the Wainimala tribes, by Major James Harding in his diary of the Nandawarau campaign in 1874 when Thakombau and his government still reigned over Fiji. We can there find a report about the advancing enemies "bearing flags which were waved by their leaders, who at the same time encouraged them with gesticulations; and from where we stood we could hear faintly the sound of their conch shells blown to spur them on."<sup>46</sup> During the last revolt in Fiji, in 1895, the rebels at Seanggangga on Vanua Levu took refuge in an old mountain stronghold. During the siege they blew their shell trumpets and executed dances.<sup>47</sup>

### *Conchs blown when the successful warriors got their new names*

Fijian warriors got a new name when they had killed someone. This name of honour, *koroi*, was conferred upon the braves at a special ceremony. Rev. John Hunt, Wesleyan missionary at Somosomo on Taveuni in 1840, gives an account of such a ceremony in his journal. The scene was the "market place" at Somosomo. After a song the successful warriors all were given a new name and the conch shells were blown. Those who had no shells responded with their voices. "The art of blowing the conch appeared to be to blow as short a blast as possible. When done well it

<sup>44</sup> *The journal of William Lockerby, sandalwood trader in the Fijian islands 1808—1809.* Postscript. Works issued by the Hakluyt Society. Sec. series. No. LII. Issued for 1922. London, 1925. P. 84.

<sup>45</sup> Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass. M 656 1833 E 5.

<sup>46</sup> James Harding, *Diary of the Na Dawarau campaign 1874.* Transactions of the Fijian Society for the year 1916. Suva, 1917. P. 71 (9.5. 1874).

<sup>47</sup> Thomson, *The Fijians.* P. 146.

resembled very much the short bass notes in a quick march. Those who responded tried to form a sound entirely different by a shrill short cry, something like the squeaking of a door. One sounded u, u. u as u in bull. The other responded i, i. i as i in bitter. Four or five of them then each took a vudi leaf and a person poured water into them, which they held for a short time in their hands. They then stood up so as to form a diameter of the circle and after having exchanged places several times, like boys in a reading class in a country school they each turned to different parts of the circumference of the circle and poured the water they held in the leaf on the ground. Those that constituted the ring and it appeared to me the others too then sang." "The heroes were then introduced. One who had not killed any person in war before was first brought forward. He was accompanied by a person carrying a large new dress and others with mats. The mats were laid on the ground for him to stand on." His old dress was taken off and the new one was put on. "While this was going on three or four parties of females came into different parts of the market place, each of them having a small dish made of the stalk of the banana tree with a preparation of oil and paint with which to anoint the heroes." The other successful warriors also came forward, "but as they had killed men in war before, they came clothed. Each of the heroes had his club on his shoulder, and it appeared to be considered a privilege to possess a club that he had held in his hand: consequently many brought him their clubs, and took his. I suppose each of them sanctified twenty clubs in this way while the ceremonies were going on. All being ready for anointing them the females brought their oil and laid on the ground and retired." The heroes were "made red from head to foot. This being over they all walked down to the sea side and soon returned, which with a little more singing closed the ceremony." The heroes had to remain in the "market place" for four days, where a shed was built for them, but at the same time they were allowed to walk about in the village and could take what they wanted. They were regarded as "turaga lealea, i. e., short chiefs, chiefs for a short time." No person was allowed to beat a drum or make any noise near them, they were "tabu sara, very sacred these four days."<sup>48</sup>

#### *The circumcision of the boys*

took place after the death of a chief. Williams tells that on the fifth day after the death on Vanua Levu one digs a hole in the floor of a *mbure* and

---

" MMS. Typed copy of John Hunt's journal. Vol. I. Pp. 200—204 (3.10. 1840). See also: Mary Davis Wallis, *Life in Feejee*. Boston, 1851. Pp. 221 ff.

hides one of the circumcised in this hole. His companions then close the house and leave. When the one who is hidden in the house blows a shell trumpet which he has taken with him, the friends of the deceased surround the house and throw their spears at him in a mock siege.<sup>49</sup>

At Koroalau on Vanua Levu the circumcised had their own club house and they could seize things without asking permission. When their wounds had begun to heal they fetched a shell trumpet, hid it in the burial place and made a dummy man of leaves. At night the boys' leader, a man already circumcised and called their *tumbutumbu tambu*, "holy grandfather," climbed upon the roof of the club house and called out, "Who is ready to come?" Another man answered, "We, the ghosts, let us eat him." One of the boys went to the grave of the deceased but stumbled over some creepers. These had been placed so that they pulled down branches which had been hung up and they fell on him. When he got to the grave he blew the shell trumpet. When the boys one by one had been at the grave, they finally went there all together. A coconut leaf was laid on the grave. A rope was tied to the leaf. All the boys pulled but the spirit, *kalou*, jumped on the leaf and they could not move it as it was said to be too heavy. Another day they went to the grave and threw the leaf away and then attacked the village which was said to be smitten by them.<sup>50</sup>

In the village Sesē on the Natewa peninsula the boys were circumcised after the death of a *ngone turanga*, a "noble youth." *Ngone turanga* is here used, as in Lau, for someone of mature age, a "prince," a chief. The boys were circumcised as *i loloku* for the dead. *I loloku* means an act which is performed as mourning. In Lau something was sacrificed for the dead; for instance, a man was killed in order to honour a chief who had passed away. Before the circumcised boys of Sesē went to bathe after the wounds had healed, a shell trumpet was hidden among the bones in the dead man's cave. One of the *tumbutumbu*, those who had banished the boys, called out the following night: "A boy goes there for you to eat." This was said in order to frighten the circumcised boys, who, however, went to fetch the hidden shell. It took some time before anyone dared to go all the way and take it. It was said that the dead man had hidden the shell trumpet. The boy who searched for it heard a cracking noise

<sup>49</sup> Th. Williams and J. Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Edited by G. S. Rowe. Sec. ed., rev. London, 1860. Vol. I. P. 167.

<sup>50</sup> A. M. Hocart, *The northern states of Fiji*. The Royal Anthropological Institute. Occasional Publication No. 11. Welwyn Garden City, 1952. P. 159.

from different places. And he could not at once find what he was looking for, but when he had found it he blew the trumpet.<sup>51</sup>

John Hunt describes the ceremonies in connection with the circumcision of some young men at Somosomo after Ra Mbithi's<sup>52</sup> death. "When the ceremony was performed the cloth on which some of the blood had been sprinkled was brought into the King's yard and put on a stick, and the persons who had been circumcised danced round it. Their dancing consisted in walking and jumping and singing and shouting and yelling, etc., a most heathenish affair to be sure and continued several nights. In the middle of the circle of dancers several men were seated on the ground with horns made of large shells, the blowing of which made sounds anything but musical." Also another ceremony "was performed by those who had been circumcised. They assembled together in the King's yard or market place and hid up leaf containing water in the top of a tree, and having blindfolded one of the young men and led him about the yard so that he should not know where he was, he was required to knock down the leaf which contained water by throwing a stick. Those who succeeded in knocking it down were considered great warriors; few, however, attained the honour."<sup>53</sup>

Unfortunately Williams does not tell what had preceded the following events. The missionary had observed that a "king's son," a boy, could place a tabu on all sorts of food in the fields. The young chief was attended by twenty boys aged 8 to 17, and all these slept under the same roof. The attendants of the king's son were spies by day. When the boys went to bed or got up this was announced by blasts from shell trumpets. People who were in the process of arranging a feast, for instance, for a wife who was to give birth to a child, must first tell the boys about this. He who did not do this would soon see the chief's son and his followers come running towards his house with small flags and shell trumpets in their hands.<sup>54</sup>

Williams does not say anything about whether the boys announced their taboos with blasts from a shell. In another connection he tells that when a maternal uncle has built a canoe it can very well happen that "an idle nephew mounts the deck, sounds his trumpet-shell, and the blast

<sup>51</sup> Ib. P. 119. A. M. Hocart, *Lau Islands, Fiji*. Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Bull. 62. Honolulu, 1929. P. 179.

<sup>52</sup> Ra Mbithi was the son of Tui Thakau, the ruler of Thakaundrove.

<sup>53</sup> Allan Birwhistle, *In his armour. The life of John Hunt of Fiji*. London, 1954. P. 99.

<sup>54</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Vol. I. P. 236.

announces to all within hearing that the canoe has, that instant changed masters."<sup>55</sup> In Hocart's work on Lau a Fijian nobleman tells us that a *vasu* who needed taro either put down sticks of reed in the field where there was a crop he wanted or blew on a shell trumpet over the taro field.<sup>56</sup>

#### *Conchs in ceremonies at deaths*

When Tui Thakau, Thakaundrove's chief, died in 1845, two heathen priests stood outside the house and blew shell trumpets, "long, dull blasts" which announced that one of the highest chiefs in Fiji had passed away.<sup>57</sup> It is not quite clear whether Williams meant that only the deaths of chiefs were announced in this way. On Vanua Levu the blasts of the shell trumpets were a signal for plundering those who had lived with the dead. One therefore hid away in good time all more valuable articles.<sup>58</sup>

Hocart says that in Lau only the nearest relatives wail when a nobleman has died. A young man from the same social class then comes and blows a shell trumpet and at that time the wailing of the bereaved ceases. The shell trumpet wails. A nobleman who wishes to express his sorrow aloud does it by letting a shell trumpet sound. When the Tui Naiau, the ruler of the whole of Lau, formerly died one blew ten to thirty shell trumpets day and night without ceasing. Those who blew replaced each other up to the time for the funeral when the mourning music stopped. When a commoner died — someone that did not belong to the noble group of the society — the shell trumpet might not be blown. The sorrow was expressed by the wailing of the bereaved. Hocart has in his work on the Lau islands a photograph of the grave of a chief, Tui Moala. Here we can see triton shells with the points downward.<sup>59</sup>

Joseph Waterhouse mentions that the shell was not allowed to wail at the death of the Roko Tui Mbau, one of two chiefs at Mbau. The Roko Tui Mbau was the holy king and the other, the Vunivalu (the Root of War), was the real ruler who had the political power. But only at the demise of the former did they blow the shell trumpet.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Ib. Vol. I. P. 37.

<sup>56</sup> Hocart, *Lau Islands, Fiji*. P. 40.

<sup>57</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Vol. I. P. 196.

<sup>58</sup> Ib. Vol. I. P. 187.

<sup>59</sup> Hocart, *Lau Islands, Fiji*. Pp. 177 f. and Pl. II E.

<sup>60</sup> Waterhouse, *The king and people of Fiji*. P. 14.

*Conch blowing at the catching of turtles*

Williams' opinion is that the shell trumpet was the fishermen's favourite instrument. It was used at the catching of turtles.<sup>61</sup> Basil Thomson says that the turtle is "royal." "Every considerable chief had turtle fishers attached to his establishment." A successful turtle expedition was announced by loud blasts on the shell trumpet and the canoes containing the turtles were received with the same noise of victory as when the dead bodies of slain enemies were carried ashore.<sup>62</sup> Kleinschmidt says — as we have recorded earlier — that the Fijians blew shell trumpets when turtles were caught during the night. When the turtle was lying on the *rara* of the canoe, the platform (the same word is used as for the village square), long blasts from the shell trumpet announced to those who were on shore that the catch had been successful. Kleinschmidt mentions also that it was formerly forbidden for *kaisi*, common people, to eat turtle meat, except when the chiefs allowed it on very important occasions.<sup>63</sup>

*Conclusions*

It is tempting to speculate on the use of the shell trumpet in the Fiji Islands. In our research we would like to know whether different kinds of shell trumpets were used on different occasions and in different regions. But our material is too incomplete to give an answer for the whole of Fiji. We have especially tried to locate and to get a cultural background for the *Bursa* shell trumpets. As long as we have no recorded conchs from Vanua Levu and from Lau in our collections we cannot, however, be sure about these shell trumpets as having existed only in some parts of Viti Levu. And if they were restricted to the Singatoka valley and surrounding regions in Viti Levu we also have to take into account a possible ecological factor: a restricted distribution of *Bursa* shells, in some coastal waters only, for instance at the mouth of the Singatoka River. This has to be investigated.

It is easier to point out that the shell trumpets — the type of conch not considered — appear in the Fiji Islands in certain definite situations which often have something in common with each other. The problem here is, that Fiji as a culture area is not homogenous in all regards, so

---

<sup>61</sup> Williams and Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*. Vol. I. Pp. 163 f.

<sup>62</sup> Thomson, *The Fijians* Pp. 321 f.

<sup>63</sup> Theodor Kleinschmidt's *Reisen auf den Viti-Inseln, nach seinen brieflichen Mittheilungen bearbeitet*. Journal des Museum Godeffroy. Vol. 14. Hamburg, 1879. Pp. 269 and 277.

we are not allowed to make a functional analysis of the kind we do when institutions exist at the same time in the same community.

The shell trumpets were both in Viti Levu and in Lau regarded as symbols of gods and they were found at *mbure kalou* and caves with a similar function. In the cave-graves of Lau the blasts from the shell could be interpreted as coming from the god. Being symbols of gods they were also instruments of the *mbete*, the priests. And they were used when gods were invoked, for example before the appearance of the "goddesses" at the presentation of goods to the Rewa chief and when the god had to be "awaked" from his sleep at earthquake.

When individuals and groups in a privileged position appeared conchs were also blown. The *vasu* sounded his trumpet shell when he took what he wanted. The successful warriors who for some days were regarded as chiefs, got their new names and the conchs were blown afterwards. In Lau the shell trumpet wailed at the death of a chief, but not when a commoner had died. The conch shell which was heard from the canoe on the occasion of a turtle expedition was the signal for the successful catch of a "royal fish."

The illustrious shell — as it was called by Rev. Lyth in one of his diaries — appeared also in the ceremonies after the circumcision of the boys which was regarded as an act of mourning over a dead chief. The conch that should be sounded by the circumcised was hidden in a burial place and blown there. An analysis of situations with conch blowing results in a recording of *mbure kalou*, graves and precincts of chiefs and one asks whether this is accidental. Both *mbure kalou* and caves and burial places of chiefs are places of worship. The *kalou* appears there. But this means that we have to deal with a difficult but central problem in Fijian ethnography, that which is created when we hypothetically identify *kalou* with an ancestor and a dead chief.

PB 0005007  
21



THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

---

This book is due on the last **DATE** stamped below.

---

JAN 22 1969  
JAN 18 REC'D

100m-8-'65 (F6282s8)2373



Digitized by Google

**THE CELLAR BOOK SHOP**

Box 6, College Park Sta.  
Detroit 21, Mich. - U.S.A.

*Printed in Sweden*

---

GÖTEBORG 1960  
ELANDERS BOKTRYCKERI AKTIEBOLAG